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UNAPPRECIATED.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I was born with a poet's heart of fire
And an artist's eye for lovely things;
My soul was a sweet untutored lyre
That longed for the tuner amid its strings;
Wild, burning words, with a meaning high,
Rose up to my lips and called for aid,
And when sunset flushed the western sky,
With spirit pencil I caught each shade.

They knew not the source whence such feeling springs,
They called me a dreaming, useless clod;
With steel-nerved fingers they clipped my wings,
And buried my talent beneath the sod;
I could never rise while they held me there,
A woman's weakness needs helping hands;
And as time rolls on with its weight of care
They draw more tightly their iron bands.

For the foamy wine that the famous quaff,
My cup with bitterest gall is rife;
For the bread of praise, their helping staff,
I must eat the stone of a fettered life.
Alas! for all that I "might have been,"
Alas! for my glorious hopes laid low,
To them be 'portioned the deadly sin,—
They held me back when I fain would go.

Friends they are called, and methought that friends
Where those who helped and hindered not,
That the trust and comfort friendship lends
Are counted by its good deeds wrought;
They have pity to spare for widows' tears,
And help where the lonely orphan sighs,
God pity me who has dwelt for years
Alone in the midst of kindred ties.

SADIE BEATTY.

THE CHILTON ESTATE;

OR,

Close Play for a Fortune.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY RETT WINWOOD,

AUTHOR OF "A BLACK SHEEP IN THE FOLD," ETC., ETC.

ROLAND STARTLED BY THE STRANGE CONDITIONS IMPOSED BY MR. CHILTON.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TENDER PASSION.

At those frank words, spoken so fearlessly by Roland Trevor, Mr. Chilton started. His face changed perceptibly. With all his powers of self-control, he could not help showing some degree of agitation.

"My niece?" he echoed, sharply. "What can you wish to say concerning her?"

Roland turned to him with a quiet dignity of manner that was wonderfully becoming.

"I love her," was his simple answer.

"Indeed!" There was an angry vehemence in that single word that Mr. Chilton could not for his life, have helped giving to it.

"I love her," the young man resumed. "You are her guardian. I am here to ask your consent to make her my wife."

Mr. Chilton controlled his rising ire by a powerful effort. He succeeded in turning a bland, smiling face upon his companion.

"Oh," he cried, affecting a playfulness he was far from feeling, "that's the way the wind blows, eh? I begin to comprehend. My niece did not give me an inkling of anything of this sort, however."

He was silent a moment, clasping and unclasping his thin hands with a nervous movement.

"May I ask," he resumed, presently, "if you have spoken of this to Claudia? Of course you have—of course she *does* know why you are here?"

Rowland bowed. "Miss Chilton has been good enough to acknowledge I have won her heart. She knows the object of this interview, and fully approves of it."

"Indeed."

Mr. Chilton was visibly disturbed. He rose up in his chair and then fell back again. His thin hands recommenced their nervous movement.

"You have taken me by surprise," he confessed. "I scarcely know what to say to you. Of course you are in a position to keep a wife?"

He looked eagerly at Roland Trevor, and his face brightened. But only for a moment.

"I am counted wealthy," was the young man's answer. "I will give you my lawyer's address, and you can inquire as closely into my affairs as you desire."

"Not now," impatiently turning his head. "We can attend to all that by and by. How long have you known my niece?"

"Several months, sir."

"Where did you make her acquaintance?"

"At the seminary, sir. I had a sister in school at the same time. We became friends through her."

Mr. Chilton dropped his eyes to hide the look of hate and fury that came into them.

"It is strange," he muttered, "that I never heard of you until to-day."

Roland smiled.

"Is it so very strange, after all?" he asked. "Claudia and I have but just come to an understanding ourselves. Of course she would not speak of me until after that had happened."

"Of course."

"We love each other very dearly, sir. I am sure I can make Claudia happy, if you will trust her future to me."

"All young men think pretty much the same thing, as regards their sweethearts, I believe. But does experience prove that they are always right?"

"It does not prove they are always wrong."

Mr. Chilton laughed. Perhaps it was not the laugh of a happy man, exactly, but Roland was scarcely likely to be a close observer at such a time.

"Well said, my young friend, very well said. You are making a pretty strong case of it, sir," and he playfully slapped Roland on the shoulder. "You love my niece, and my niece loves you. You are rich enough to take a wife whenever you please."

"Yes, sir."

"And, of course, you will please to do so very soon?"

"With your consent—yes, sir."

Mr. Chilton looked disturbed, despite the suavity he sought to put on. He bit his lip and was silent for a moment. It angered him almost beyond control that there was no legitimate excuse for separating the lovers.

"It would not be politic for me to refuse that consent," he said, forcing himself to speak the words. "I do not wish to abuse my powers as guardian. I lend my sanction to this betrothal. But I do so on two conditions."

Roland rose up eagerly.

"What are they?" he cried. "You know I will do anything reasonable for Claudia's sake."

"Calm yourself," smiled Mr. Chilton, "and hear the first condition. It is this—when you leave this house to-day you must go with the intention of remaining separated from my niece for the space of two months."

The young man uttered a sudden ejaculation.

"Two months! That would seem like half a life-time."

"It is only sixty days."

"Sixty eternities!"

Mr. Chilton shrugged his shoulders.

"Do you consent, or do you not?" he said, blandly.

"I am compelled to consent. It would be useless to protest against the condition."

"Ay, utterly useless."

"But of course I can write to Claudia as often as I please?"

The ready villain shook his head.

"That is the second condition, to which I was coming as rapidly as possible. Now you understand my terms. You are not to see my niece, or hold any communication whatever with her, until the two months have passed."

Roland turned pale at these words. For the first time he looked sharply and suspiciously into the face of his companion. But he could read nothing there.

"I think you have made two very singular conditions," he said, in a low voice.

"They may seem such to you."

"I do not comprehend them in the least."

"Let me explain," purred Mr. Chilton. "There is nothing more likely than that two young people, who imagine themselves in love for the first time, should eventually discover that they were mistaken. We don't know our own minds at so early an age. We can't know them until—"

"Do you doubt that I love Claudia, or that Claudia loves me?" interrupted Roland, hotly.

"I don't doubt the honesty of your present impressions," was the bland reply. "But I am deeply interested in the happiness of my niece. She shall not wreck it by a mistake of that sort, if I can prevent it. Do you blame me?"

"No," answered the young man, looking thoughtfully upon the floor.

"Thank you, sir, thank you. Your good sense is charming. Now two months is a short time—very short. But it is long enough, perhaps, for you and Claudia to make sure of your own minds. It will soon be over, and then—"

"Then you withdraw every objection to our union?"

"I withdraw every objection," bowing and smiling.

"Good." Roland seemed to have recovered his good-humor again. "It will be hard—but I *can* turn my back on the girl I love for that length of time. I will, since you insist upon it. But I do assure you that you are putting us both to an useless test."

"Pray allow me to be the judge of that, Mr. Trevor."

"Certainly. May I inquire if you have spoken upon this subject with Claudia?"

"I have not. Did I not tell you that I entered this room in total ignorance of your mission here?"

"Ah, I had forgotten."

Roland bowed, but he looked slightly incredulous. It occurred to him that Mr. Chilton must have conceived his objections very suddenly indeed.

"Of course I am to be permitted to see Claudia again before I go?" he said, after a moment's silence.

"Yes." He rose with alacrity, and walked toward the door. "I will send my niece to you directly," he said, turning with his hand on the knob. "Say to her what you please, only impress upon her mind the necessity of fulfilling my wishes to the letter."

Then he went out. Claudia had already gone up-stairs to change her travelling-dress, but he sent up a message by his wife, and she soon re-appeared, dressed in a rose-colored silk that rendered her beauty more striking and piquant than ever.

Mr. Chilton never knew precisely what transpired in the library. But he paced the drawing-room floor with a very black frown upon his brow. His lips were white and tremulous. He felt that a single straw might even yet turn the tide of his fortunes so that utter ruin would result.

At last Roland Trevor came out, and was driven away in the carriage which had brought him to Chilton Villa.

Then, and not until then, did that bold, bad man in the drawing-room begin to breathe freely once more. He shook his clenched fist after the rapidly-disappearing carriage, while his contorted features were awful to look upon.

"When you come to this house again," he muttered slowly, and with devilish malignancy, "you will find your sweetheart in another man's arms, or—"

He never finished the sentence. A slight shudder shook his frame, and he dropped his face into his hands and remained silent and motionless for some time.

At last footsteps approached, and he was aroused by a hand laid on his shoulder. It was Claudia's.

"Roland is gone," she said, in a very low voice, "and I know all you have said to him."

Mr. Chilton started up. He looked at her furtively, and then looked away again.

"You forgive me!" he faltered. "You believe I have been working for your good?"

"What else can I think?" She brought her face close down to his, of a sudden, and looked him straight in the eye. He found it very difficult to meet that searching gaze without flinching.

"Tell me that you are truly my friend, Uncle Eustace—that you intend to make good my dead papa's place so far as you can?" she cried, imploringly

He gently kissed her cheek, though half-frightened at the strangeness of her manner.

"What can it mean?" he thought. "But girls are whimsical. Is it anything more in this case, I wonder?"

Then aloud he said;

"Do you doubt me, Claudia? Have I ever given you the slightest cause to distrust me?"

"No, no. But—" she stopped short, shuddering violently. "Don't mind me, Uncle Eustace," she cried, turning her face away. "I am not myself this morning."

He caught her hand, and compelled her to look at him again.

"Has Mr. Trevor been slandering me to you?" he demanded, sternly. "Has he been exciting suspicions of any sort?"

"No, no, no," she reiterated, quite losing her beautiful color now. "Roland said nothing that was not manly and kind. It is not like him. I would not have listened if he had. It was only a foolish feeling that suddenly came over me, and—"

She broke off abruptly once more. "I will go back to my room again, Uncle Eustace, if you have no objection," she added, in a scarcely audible voice.

"Go, by all means, my dear. Shall I send your aunt to keep you company?"

"No, no." In spite of her efforts, a look of repulsion showed itself in her face. Women read each other much more quickly than they read the opposite sex, and Claudia had found it utterly impossible to regard Mrs. Chilton with any other sentiment than aversion and horror.

Mr. Chilton's keen eyes read the truth in an instant. He was sorry, but perhaps it did not matter much, after all.

"Very well," he said, pleasantly. "Then I will keep her away from you. I want you to be happy here."

"Thank you." She looked up to him eagerly now. "There is one person I *would* like to have with me, Uncle Eustace."

"Who is that?"

"The girl you introduced to me in this room—Hetty Deane."

Mr. Chilton started. He changed color, a momentary fear showing itself in his face. He had almost forgotten Hetty's presence in the house.

"Why should you care for her society?" he asked, quickly recovering himself.

"Because she is near my own age, and because I am sure I shall like her. Please, Uncle Eustace, send her to me and let her stay with me as much as possible."

"Will you be the happier for it, if I do?"

"Yes, yes, indeed, I will."

"Then she shall be your companion for the present, if I can so arrange it. She is a poor sewing-girl, you must know, and will be glad of your patronage."

"So much the better."

"I happen to know that she is engaged at this present moment. But she shall come to you ere long. You have my word for it."

"Thank you, dear uncle."

She tripped lightly from the room, her spirits nearly restored by this promise, and Mr. Chilton was left to his own reflections.

Affairs had taken a curious turn indeed. Would it be safe to bring these two girls together a second time? He doubted it.

And yet what excuse had he for backing down from his pledged word to Claudia?

CHAPTER X.

MIGHT AGAINST RIGHT.

The day wore on, and some hours past noon Hetty Deane was still locked in that room on the ground floor into which she had been thrust by Mr. Chilton.

She had flung herself in a crouching posture against the wall, quite mute, but palpitating with a sense of guilt and terror.

How very vile she had been to lend herself to the plot against an innocent man! Would God ever forgive her? Could she ever forgive herself? Was it too late to expose the fraud she had helped to perpetrate upon James Chilton?

She wrung her hands in an agony of remorse as such thoughts coursed through her brain.

Sometimes she was tempted to scream for help. But what friend could she expect to find in that dreadful house?

She heard footsteps coming and going, and frequently the low hum of voices. But it was impossible to tell to whom they belonged.

Once she rose up and approached the window, thinking to escape to the lawn. But a rough-looking man stood leaning against the wall outside, and he silently motioned her to go back again.

She did so, in greater trepidation than ever, on discovering this new evidence of the vigilance of her enemies.

At last a key turned in the lock, and Lamont came bowing and smiling into the room.

Hetty started to her feet with an ejaculation of surprise, for she imagined that the wiry little Frenchman had quitted the house the night before.

"Are you astonished?" he purred, sidling up to her. "Have I startled you, my dear? No matter, if you are only glad to see me."

"But I am not glad to see you," she returned in a cold voice.

"No? That is strange. It is particularly strange, because you have been shut up in this dreary place so long."

She gave a shiver of repulsion, and said:

"I have not been here long enough to find your face an agreeable sight, at all events."

Lamont laughed. He did not appear in the least disconcerted by this plain speaking.

"Little minx," he cried, still smirking and smiling, "what a tongue you have got! It's like a pepper box. But I like you none the less for it."

He tripped lightly up to her, and threw himself into a seat. "Sit down, my dear," he pursued, gracefully pointing out a second chair. "I am come to you as an ambassador. I must have your perfect attention during the next few minutes."

Hetty declined the chair, and returned, haughtily:

"I have no wish to hear anything you have come to say."

"No? Think again, my dear. Mr. Chilton sent me."

"I do not care who sent you."

"But it is for your interest to hear me. Don't look at poor little Lamont like that. Don't speak to him in such a tone, and with such an air. What has he done that you should regard him as an enemy?"

"What have you done?" echoed Hetty, growing agitated and hysterical. "You have enticed me away from the humble little room where I was happy, you villain! You have compelled me to aid and abet you in a scheme that fills me with horror."

"Parbleu," cried Lamont. "You have helped us to hide a helpless girl away from a relative who meant her no good. Was there anything wrong in that?"

"You scoundrel," exclaimed Hetty, beginning to sob, "I have helped to isolate an unsuspecting girl in the midst of a crew of unscrupulous villains! That is the true manner of stating the case."

Lamont shrugged his shoulders.

"Do you really think so? Very good—I shall not undertake to disturb your conviction. But I came here to make a proposition. Listen while I put it into words."

"I do not wish to hear you," interrupted Hetty, loudly and violently.

"But you *must*, my dear. So sit down and listen quietly."

She looked round almost fiercely. Then a long, sobbing breath escaped her. The Frenchman was right. She must listen to whatever he might say.

"Go on," she said, confronting him.

"Good. What I have to tell refers to Claudia Chilton. She has taken a violent fancy to you—which is not strange in the least. She wishes you to become her constant companion while she remains here."

He stopped short, apparently to watch the effect of the words he had already spoken. He saw Hetty change color and a strange fire come into her bright blue eyes.

"Surely," she faltered, "you have not come here to propose anything of that sort?"

"But I have, my dear. You must know that your situation in this house is rather peculiar," and he gave an embarrassed cough. "Mr. Chilton thinks—and I perfectly agree with him—that there is nothing left for us to do but to make use of you."

Hetty looked incredulous. After all that had happened, would Mr. Chilton *dare* to trust her again, and in such a manner?

Her doubts were soon set at rest. Lamont soon hastily walked to the door, and flung it open.

"You may come in now," he said, addressing somebody who stood outside.

Mr. Chilton instantly stepped across the threshold. He had evidently been waiting for this invitation.

His face looked darker and more forbidding than usual. Hetty shrank involuntarily as he approached.

"I hope you are in a mood to talk sense," he said, curtly. "I have no time to trifle."

Hetty only stared at him speechless.

"You have found out too much concerning us to be allowed to go quietly away," he resumed. "Serve us faithfully, and you shall be well paid for your trouble. Betray us, and you will never live to boast of your treachery."

There was something hard and repellant in the gaze the man fixed upon her. Hetty knew he would be relentless and cruel as the grave. She knew she had no mercy and no kindness to expect from him.

She struggled desperately with herself for a moment, and at last her voice came back to her.

"What would you have me do?"

"Remain here as Claudia's companion and friend, and do all in your power to help along our cause with her."

"Never, never!"

Mr. Chilton uttered a fearful oath. He advanced toward her with his hand clenched and uplifted.

"You *shall!*" he hissed, savagely. "You have no choice between that and—death!"

He had spoken the word at last, and then he paused in sudden horror of it. Strong tremors shook his frame. But the desperate purpose expressed in voice and face and eye never once faltered.

Lamont broke the silence that had fallen.

"Be reasonable," he whispered in Hetty's ear. "If you don't accept the office somebody else will. Claudia wants *you*. Mr. Chilton means what he says. You had better promise all he asks."

The poor girl wrung her hands in bitter anguish. Was she never to be freed from the spell of these miscreants? Were their meshes to close more and more tightly about her until she was as bad as the vilest of them all?

Her head fell upon her breast. Then a sudden thought came to her like an inspiration. She, at least, could protect Claudia to the extent of her poor power; another might play wholly into the hands of her enemies. Was it not better, under the circumstances, to yield to the superior power?

"Promise," urged Lamont, still in a whisper.

"I do," she said, breaking into a hysterical cry. "You give me no freedom of choice. I will remain."

"It is well," and Mr. Chilton drew a breath of relief. "Lamont, bring the Bible."

While Hetty stared in utter amazement, a Bible was brought, and held before her.

"Now place your hand upon this book and swear that you will never reveal to my niece, Claudia, any discovery you may have made, or anything you have done, since coming to this house."

Hetty hesitated, and grew pale as death.

"Swear!" commanded that terrible voice.

There was no help for it. She dropped her hand on the Bible, and said in a scared whisper:

"I swear."

"Enough." The villain knew well the power of such an oath with a girl of Hetty's stamp. "Now take care that you are faithful in word, thought and action. The slightest show of treachery on your part will be visited with summary punishment. I think you understand this?"

"Yes."

"Good. You will be closely watched, and every movement you make reported to me. You cannot trifle with me with impunity. It is very necessary you should realize that fact. I hope you do."

Hetty bowed. She could no longer trust herself to speak.

"It is well," went on that hard, pitiless voice. "Now try to compose yourself. In a very few moments you must go up-stairs to Claudia's room. She expects you."

"She expects you," echoed the little Frenchman, in a whisper. "Now listen to poor old Lamont, my dear child, and be reasonable."

CHAPTER XI.

FACE TO FACE.

Mr. Chilton went out. He found a servant in the hall, whom he sent to summon Mrs. Chilton.

That lady soon made her appearance, the picture of cold serenity, as usual. And, as usual, her dry, white hands were meekly folded.

Her husband whispered a few words in her ear. She nodded, and the ghost of a smile hovered about her thin lips. Apparently in obedience to some command of his, she turned and glided up-stairs to the door of Claudia's bed-room.

"Come in," said a sweet voice, in answer to her timid knock.

She entered. Claudia was sitting by the window, but she rose instantly, with a pleased smile of welcome.

"I am glad you have come."

At that point she stopped short. Turning, she saw, for the first time, who the intruder really was. The smile died from her lips, and a slight tremor shook her frame.

Mrs. Chilton observed this sudden change, and her pale face grew paler still. She did not speak, but a wolfish look came into her strange eyes.

"I thought it was Hetty Deane," faltered Claudia, feeling that she must say something.

"No, it is not Hetty Deane."

The voice was cold and even. Claudia shivered again, but finally conquered the repugnance she felt for this woman, sufficiently to hold out her hand to her.

"Sit down, Aunt Chilton. Of course I am glad to see you. Only I was expecting somebody else, you see—and—and—"

Mrs. Chilton slowly waved her hand.

"No matter," she said, quietly. "There is nothing for which to apologise. No, I will not sit down. I only came in to say one word to you. And that word is in reference to—"

She paused.

"To whom?" questioned Claudia, eagerly.

"This same Hetty Deane."

"Yes, yes. Is she coming to me directly? I don't know why I have taken so sudden a fancy to her. I am actually trembling with eagerness to see her once again."

Mrs. Chilton looked up sharply. A slight, a very slight shadow flitted over her pallid face.

"Hetty is coming directly," she answered. "But you have not heard what I wish to say of her."

"No."

"It is not much." Mrs. Chilton's eyes were now sweeping the floor. "Perhaps you do not need to be told—perhaps you have noticed it for yourself."

Claudia's impatience now mastered her. She was led into a rudeness of which she was not often guilty.

"Noticed what!" she echoed, crossly.

"That there is something peculiar about this same Hetty Deane."

"No," her blue eyes dilating, "I have noticed nothing of the sort. You puzzle me. I do not catch your meaning at all."

Mrs. Chilton sighed.

"You have not been with Hetty long enough to grasp at her peculiarities," she said, gently. "I see that very plainly, now. But I think they ought to be mentioned to you all the same."

"She seems a very pleasant, lovable girl."

"And so she is," assented Mrs. Chilton, sighing more profoundly than before. "But—but—there is something wrong with her here."

She tapped her brow significantly, and looked hard at her niece.

"Impossible!" cried Claudia, in horrified surprise, for she could not help taking in the full meaning of that gesture and the words to which it was an accompaniment.

"It is more than possible—it is true," was the gentle response. "But, looking at her, no one would imagine that her mind had lost its balance."

Claudia stood staring at her aunt in silent consternation. She knew not what to think or say.

"Hetty is not a maniac, of course," Mrs. Chilton resumed. "Perhaps she never will be one of those unfortunates. Her mind is simply unhinged. It is a sort of hypochondria, perhaps. I don't pretend to understand her case. But its symptoms are peculiar, to say the least."

"Will you tell me some of them?"

"With pleasure. In the first place, she can put on the demeanor of a perfectly sane person. Her looks and words seem to be as lucid as yours or mine. Not that this is peculiar—I believe it has been observed in many demented persons. But her mind seems to be filled with forebodings, and even with distrust of her best friends. She imagines that a thousand calamities threaten herself and those about her. Sometimes her suspicions are directed against my husband, sometimes against me, but oftener against other people. She looks wise, and throws out vague and mysterious hints. One would imagine some terrible conspiracy was going on, to hear her strange insinuations."

She stopped to note the effect of the words she had spoken thus far. Claudia looked surprised and sorrowful, and full of gentle pity—but not incredulous. Her trusting nature could scarcely conceive the treachery of which she was being made the victim.

Mrs. Chilton's eyes lighted up with supreme satisfaction. "I need not add another word," she said, smiling. "I have said enough already to give you to understand what weight is to be attached to anything Hetty may insinuate. Forewarned is forearmed, my dear niece."

"Yes, yes."

"Hetty may never trouble you with any of her freaks, after all. If so, you will please treat her as though she possessed no weakness of that sort."

"Poor girl," said Claudia, softly. "I shall certainly be kind to her."

"And you will conceal from her your knowledge of her mania?"

"Yes."

"Thank you."

Mrs. Chilton smiled, and walked away with the air of a woman who has discharged a very unpleasant duty.

Her husband was waiting for her at the foot of the stairs.

"Have you succeeded?" he asked, briefly.

"I have succeeded," answered the infamous woman. "Claudia believes every word I said to her."

He signed for her to pass on. Then he opened the door of the apartment where Hetty and Lamont were still waiting.

"All is ready."

Hetty caught the words distinctly enough, but for a moment she was incapable of moving. A sudden film swam before her eyes—there was a rushing sound in her ears.

How would it end? In what was all this treachery and deceit likely to end?

"Fool!" hissed Mr. Chilton, roughly catching hold of her arm. "It is too late now to turn back. Play the idiot at this stage of the game, and it is at your peril and—at Claudia's."

The mention of Claudia's name was enough. Hetty struggled with the deadly faintness that beset her, and conquered it. She rose up slowly.

"Show me the way," she said, in tones of icy determination. "I will go to your niece this instant. See, you can trust me now."

He looked at her keenly, and then decided that he could trust her.

"Go," he whispered, pushing her into the empty hall. "It is the third door to the right, on the landing."

Hetty waited to hear no more. She ran up the stairs like a person pursued by some unseen demon. Another moment, and she had crossed the threshold of Claudia's bedroom.

She and Claudia were face to face once more.

For some seconds neither of these girls, so singularly like each other in form and feature—so very different in their natures—spoke. Both were agitated. But with what very different feelings did each gaze upon the other!

Claudia's eyes were full of love and tender pity.

Hetty's had remorse and guilt and horror, as well, mirrored in their clear depths.

Claudia was first to speak.

"Dear Hetty," she said, gently. She took a sudden step forward. The next instant they were locked in each other's arms.

It was a sudden, instinctive attraction that drew these two together in that loving embrace. Neither could explain it, or even thought of wondering at it. They only knew that already they loved each other very dearly.

At last Claudia gently released herself from Hetty's clinging arms and sat down. She blushed at the thought of her own foolishness.

"I could not help it," she murmured, apologetically, and smiling very sweetly. "I seem to be strangely drawn to you, Hetty."

"And I to you," returned Hetty, agitatedly.

"You shall be my sister. I never had one."

"Nor I."

"I am glad of that. You will be all the more ready to take me in the place of one, perhaps."

Hetty burst into a sudden passion of tears.

"I am not worthy," she cried, wildly. "I am a poor, guilty creature, and do not deserve to remain in your presence."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

☞ A remarkable case of catalepsy occurred last week at Fort Wayne, Indiana. A little girl, three years old, was supposed to have died, and every preparation for the funeral was made two days thereafter. While the funeral services were in progress, and the body of the child was about to be conveyed to the tomb, the supposed corpse revived, and to the great surprise and joy of mourning friends, the child was again restored to life, and has now fully recovered.

☞ The Brooklyn Eagle has a spite against Shakspeare. Last year it said that he was "much overrated." This year it says his "thoughts are sometimes majestic, and his puns always puerile." Authorities differ as to the origin of this animosity, but it is generally attributed to the belief that some of the descendants of Shakspeare's maternal aunt are engaged in a conspiracy to start another paper in Kings County.—*N. Y. Commercial Advertiser.*

☞ Domestic mails—Married men.

SETH SKINNER'S LUCK.

HIS OWN STORY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

I.

My parents died of a prevailing contagious fever while I was a mere infant, and like Pip, in Dickens's "Great Expectations," "I was brought up by hand." My aunt, like Mrs. Joe Gargery, often got upon the "rampage," and as her husband was not disposed to shield me from her wrath, I was chastised more than was good for my physical or moral health. Still I lived, and grew tough and callous in consequence of so much punishment.

One day when I was about ten years old, I found myself alone in the house. The doors of the kitchen-cupboard stood open before me, and the temptation to explore its shelves was too great to be resisted. I had a passionate fondness for preserves, and I knew that my aunt kept some of them on the top shelf. So I got a high chair, climbed upon it, and soon had a jar of the sweet delicacies in my hands. I laid hold of a fork, and commenced bolting the fruit at a fearful rate. While I had two or three peaches in my throat in the process of swallowing, and my mouth crammed as full as I could get it, my aunt suddenly entered the room. I was certain that she went out in the garden planting beans, when I commenced my raid on the preserves. What with fright and guilt, and having too many preserves in my throat, I was nearly suffocated; I tumbled from the chair, dropped the jar containing the preserves, and broke it into several pieces, scattering the peaches over the floor.

With a look of terrible and righteous indignation, my aunt caught me by the back of the neck and dragged me out into the yard, where she broke off a long switch from a lilac bush, and commenced belaboring me most unmercifully. I yelled and kicked, and kicked and yelled; my aunt scolded and whipped, and whipped and scolded. At length she was forced to desist from sheer exhaustion.

As soon as my aunt released me I slipped away, and ran with all my might out into the orchard, where I fell down under a big, blossoming apple-tree and wept bitterly.

While I was whimpering and snuffling in a forlorn and piteous manner, a little figure, clad in a red calico frock approached me, and a little girl knelt down by my side, and placed her soft little hand on my forehead.

"What ails you, Seth?" she said, in a voice as little and soft as her hand.

I knew the child tolerably well. It was little Ruth Farley, neighbor Farley's youngest daughter. I turned my face from her, and tried to dry my eyes.

"What ails you, Seth? What makes you cry so?" she asked again.

"Boo-hoo; Aunt Lib has whipped me awfully," I blubbered.

"What did she do it for?" continued the child, pityingly.

Here was a dilemma for me. My conscience would not permit me to tell a lie outright, and I was ashamed to tell the truth. So I covered my face with my hands, and turned over upon my stomach—for the preserves I had eaten so greedily were beginning to tell upon me.

"Tell me what your aunt whipped you for, Seth, or I'll think you've been doin' suthin' awful," said the little girl, pulling my hands away from my blushing face.

I saw there was no escape, I arose to a sitting posture, and said, desperately—

"I was stealin' peach-preserves out of the kitchen-cupboard."

Little Ruth's face turned pale, and she seemed greatly horrified.

"Oh, Seth, how could you be so wicked?" she said, drawing away from me.

"I don't know as 'twas much wicked," I said, attempting to argue the point. "I had a right to some of the preserves, I reckon, but I wish I hadn't eat quite so many of 'em," and here I carried my hands involuntarily to my stomach.

"Oh, Seth, it was *awful* wicked. The Sunday-school teacher says we mustn't steal, and if we do, God will be very angry with us, and we can't never go to Heaven."

I had never been to Sunday-school, and was poorly instructed in theology, although I was two years older than my companion.

"How does the Sunday-school teacher know?" I inquired.

"The Bible says so," replied little Ruth, solemnly.

I scarcely knew what the Bible was; but I concluded that it was useless to argue further, for the little girl seemed to know all about such matters.

"Well, I s'pose it was wicked for me to steal the preserves; and I'm sorry, 'cause they've made me feel dreadful bad," and down I went on my stomach once more, in a paroxysm of pain.

My companion looked on in pitying silence while I kicked about over the grass. At length the pain abated, and I got upon my feet. My clothes were stained, and my nose was scratched by contact with the ground. I felt miserable in the extreme.

"Seth, you must promise me never to steal anything again," said little Ruth, catching hold of my hand, and staring at me with her big mournful gray eyes.

"I'll never steal any more preserves," I answered earnestly.

"You musn't steal nothin'! Preserves nor sugar nor apples nor anything else. It's *awful* wicked! Promise Seth."

"Well, I promise," I said. "I didn't know it was as much harm as you say it is. I'll never do so again. Now, let's go and hunt birds'-nests together."

"You musn't break the eggs, or kill the poor little birdies," said the little girl.

"No, indeed; I never does nothin' of that kind. We'll just look into the nests, and count the eggs, or the birdies, and then leave 'em. Come along!"

Little Ruth slipped her hand into mine, and away we went through the orchard, eagerly scanning every tree in the hope of finding a bird's-nest. My whipping was forgotten; in fact, I was whipped so much that I considered an ordinary chastisement of no importance. Had each correction made me miserable for a day, I would have had no time left for happiness.

At length our quest was successful. We found a robin's nest built upon the lowest bough of an apple-tree; and, bending down the branch carefully, we looked cautiously into the nest. It contained three or four little monsters with naked bodies and horribly gaping mouths; but we thought the young birds beautiful, and commenced laughing with delight.

"What are you cackling so about?" demanded a loud, rude voice.

We turned to look at the new comer. It was David Parsons, my aunt's only child. He was a year or two older than myself, and a good deal bigger. Although he was my cousin, I hated him intensely, for he was as overbearing and disagreeable as a boy could be and live.

"Oh, Dave, come and look at the young robins," said Ruth, who liked everybody, even ugly Dave Parsons. The boy approached and looked over her shoulder.

"Yes, they're regular beauties, I tell you," he said, "I'm goin' to have some fun with 'em."

Snatching one of the little things from the nest, he placed it on a twig higher up, where it held on by its claws. Picking up a stone, he threw it at the young bird, which fell to the ground bleeding and mangled by the blow.

"Oh, Dave, you wicked, wicked boy, how can you do so?" said Ruth, almost crying.

"Why, easy; I just take a stone and fling it at 'em," replied Dave, laughing. "I'm goin' to serve the rest of 'em in the same way."

"Oh, you musn't! The poor little innocent birdies, they don't do any harm."

Dave laughed the harder, and gathered up a handful of stones.

"Seth, don't let him do it; it's a shame," said little Ruth, turning to me.

"You musn't hurt the other birds; let 'em be in the nest," I said.

"Indeed! I'll do just as I please about that," retorted Dave, throwing a stone at the nest.

I ran up, and caught his hands. He broke loose from me, and struck me a blow in the face. This irritated my combativeness, and I closed with him in a furious struggle. We tugged at each other desperately for some moments; at last I managed to throw him to the ground.

"Now," I said, sitting astride of his breast, and grasping his long, lank hair, "you've got to promise never to rob or destroy a bird's-nest again."

"Let me up," he said, squirming like a snake.

"You've got to promise," I answered, giving his hair a gentle pull.

"Oh! don't pull my hair out—I promise."

"Now you can get up," I said, scrambling to my feet. Dave got up likewise, looking very sheepish, and sneaked away without saying a word.

"What does the Sunday-school teacher say about fightin'—is that wicked too?" I asked, turning to little Ruth Farley, who seemed a good deal shocked and frightened.

"I don't know what she says, but *I* don't think it was wrong in this case."

"You think I done right in whippin' Dave, do you?"

"Yes, I do, 'cause you only done it to keep him from killin' the little birdies."

"Well, I'm glad you think so. Aunt Lib will give it to me awful when I go home."

"Will she whip you, do you s'pose?"

"I reckon she will—she'll tan me well, when Dave tells her about it; and he'll be sure to tell a lot of lies. But I don't care, so long as you like me, and think I done right."

"I do like you, Seth, oh, ever so much! You may kiss me, if you want to."

Of course I wanted to. The little girl's cheeks were red as roses.

"I must go home now, Seth," said Ruth. "Good-bye. Remember your promise about stealin'!"

"I will. Let me kiss you again, Ruth. There—now good bye."

I was not mistaken concerning the reception awaiting me at home. My aunt met me with a stick, and beat me till she was tired; then she informed me that I would have to hoe potatoes all the rest of the day, and go without my dinner. The punishment was severe; but I thought of little Ruth Farley's kiss, and felt glad that I had whipped my big, overbearing cousin.

II.

Eleven years passed away, bringing many changes, as the years always do.

I, Seth Skinner, was a little boy no longer, but a tall, stalwart young man of one-and-twenty, with a deep voice and an incipient mustache. I still lived with my aunt, because I had no other place to go to, being without friends or money; and my aunt was not as unkind as formerly. My uncle was dead, and I had the chief management of the large farm, as my Cousin Dave was too lazy to work. He spent the greater part of his time at the nearest village, lounging about the stores and taverns. When he was at home he was rude and insolent, although his mother thought him perfect, and gave him nearly all the ready money which the farm brought in. I received scarcely any pay for my work, except a very moderate amount of clothes; but my aunt continually reminded me that I ought to be grateful to her, because, like Mrs. Gargery, she had "brought me up by hand."

Little Ruth Farley was little Ruth no longer—but a well-grown, beautiful young lady of nineteen. Her parents died when she was fourteen; and by their dying request she came to live with my aunt, as her own relatives were all living in a distant part of the country. My aunt treated Ruth as if she had been her own daughter; and I knew she expected her to marry her dissolute son Dave. Ruth vowed to me that she would never marry him, or any one else but myself; and I believed her, and was happy. We had been lovers ever since we kissed each other, eleven years before, under the apple-tree; and we hoped some time to be in a position to marry, although the future did not look very promising.

Dave Parsons loved the girl, I think, as well as he could love anything but himself, or the wine-cup; but as he looked upon her as his future wife, and entertained no fears of losing her, he did not trouble her much by his attentions, for which Ruth was deeply thankful. She disliked the man, as a pure, high-minded woman must dislike an ignorant, drunken boor.

One day my aunt summoned me into her presence. I knew, by her manner, that she had something important to communicate.

"You were twenty-one yesterday," she said, "and I suppose you consider yourself a man. At any rate, it is my duty to tell you that your father left in my care, at his death, the sum of two hundred dollars, to be delivered to you when you came of age. I have the money here; but before I give it to you, I want you to promise not to spend it foolishly, but put it in the bank, where it will be safe, and be drawing interest. You have no use for it, as you can work enough to buy anything you need."

"I am not in the habit of spending money, and I think I can take care of that," I said. "If I remain here, I will put it in the bank; but I think it would be better for me to go where I can get a home for myself."

"A home for yourself! Why, haven't you a home here? You are welcome, as long as you work faithfully, and manage the farm as well as you have done."

"But I want a home of my own—a home for my wife, as well as myself."

"Good gracious, boy, you're not thinking of getting married, I hope?"

"I am," I answered, feeling a little foolish.

"Dear me! who in the world is willing to marry you?"

"One who is in every way worthy of me, aunt—Miss Ruth Farley."

My aunt gazed at me a moment, too amazed and angry to speak.

"Ruth Farley—are you mad? She is to be my son's wife—he loves her, and she shall marry him in spite of you or all the world. It's a settled thing; it was the dying wish of her parents. Would you dare to interfere with my dear son's prospects—you, whom I brought up out of charity? Your ingratitude is shameful, and the sooner you leave my house the better. Take your money and go with it; but never come back to me for anything more—I disown you."

My affectionate relative ran on until she worked herself up to a perfect frenzy. I slipped out of the house, and walked down to the village, feeling very independent with two hundred dollars in my pocket. There was a young man in the village with whom I had a slight acquaintance, who had been to California. He gave a glowing account of that land of gold, and avowed his intention of going back there at the earliest opportunity. I sought out this young man, and after talking the matter over for awhile, we agreed to start together for the gold-diggings the very next day.

Laurens—that was his name—was an impetuous young fellow, fond of adventure and excitement; he easily persuaded me that we could make our fortunes at the mines in a few months. Poor fellow! little enough *he* made there—but I will not anticipate.

I went back to my aunt's house and made what little preparation was necessary for the journey; then I went out into the garden, where I saw Ruth Farley at work among the flowers, to bid her good-bye. Ruth looked prettier than ever, with her cheeks flushed with exercise, and the brown curls falling over her white forehead.

"Ruth, I am going away," I said, catching her hands and looking down into her sweet dark eyes.

"Going away—where?" she asked, her face paling a little.

"To California. My aunt has told me to leave her house, and I am going to dig gold and make my fortune. Then I'll come back and marry my pretty sweetheart—for you'll be true to me, won't you, Ruth?"

"I'll be true to you always, Seth—you know I will."

"And you won't marry my Cousin Dave, if he wants you to ever so much?"

"I'll never marry anybody but you, Seth, for I could never love another."

"I believe you, Ruth. And, God willing, I will come back to you inside of two years at the most, and we will be happy together as the day is long."

We walked together through the garden, and I told her of all my plans and hopes. It was hard for us to part. Under the grape-vine arbor I took her in my arms and kissed her again and again.

"Good-bye, Ruth, my darling, my sweet," I murmured. "I did not know how I loved you until now. If you are false to me I shall die, I think."

"You need not be afraid. I love you as you love me, and I will never forget you."

"God bless you, Ruth. Write to me often, as I shall to you."

We parted. Ruth ran back to the house, while I shouldered my budget of clothing and started for the village. As I leaped the garden fence a man raised up out of the currant-bushes and confronted me. It was Dave Parsons.

"Well, sir, I overheard your interview with Miss Ruth Farley," he said.

"You are always meddling with what is none of your business," I retorted, angrily.

"I suppose you think you'll marry Ruth when you come back, eh, my fine fellow?"

"I shall certainly do so, if she is alive by that time."

"You certainly won't, you beggar, for Ruth will be *my* wife."

"You lazy, drunken scoundrel! Ruth would rather die than marry you."

"Drunken scoundrel, am I? Take that for your impudence," said Dave, aiming a blow at my face. I avoided it by springing aside, and gave him one in return that sent him sprawling among the bushes. He scrambled to his feet, and shook his fist at me in impotent fury.

"Seth Skinner, I swear by the eternal God that you shall never marry Ruth Farley," he shouted.

I laughed scornfully, and walked rapidly away. I passed the night with my friend Laurens, at the village tavern, and in the morning we started for that modern El Dorado, California.

III.

After a prosperous voyage, which seemed very tedious to me, however, the ship which bore us arrived at San Francisco. We did not delay here, but pushed on toward the gold-fields in the interior. Laurens was slightly acquainted with the country, and I trusted entirely to his judgment.

After several days spent in travelling and prospecting, we selected a site which pleased our fancy—a rude mountain gorge, a half-mile from the tents of any of the other miners. We had no particular reasons for expecting gold here, but we thought it as good a spot as any, and it was a place where we were not likely to be disturbed by others.

After erecting our tent, we went to work with brilliant anticipations of future wealth. We dug and shovelled day after day, but with very poor results. The ground at that place was certainly not rich in gold. We began to get discouraged, but determined to try a little longer. Our small stock of money was gone, and our provisions were nearly exhausted; if we did not find gold soon, we should be obliged to turn our hands to some other employment, or starve.

One day we resolved that if we did not find a nugget before night, we would remove to some more favorable spot. We were both down the shaft; Laurens was digging in one corner, while I stood watching him, listlessly; I had almost given up to despair. I thought of Ruth Farley, waiting for me to come back with the promised fortune, and my heart sank within me.

Suddenly Laurens's pick struck a hard substance. It was not a rock, but it gave back a dull, metallic sound. It might be a nugget—if so, it was one large enough to make the fortunes of both. Laurens dropped his pick for a moment, and turned to me, his face white with excitement.

"By Heaven, Skinner, I believe we are coming to a nugget at last," he said.

"Let us decide the matter at once," I answered, getting down on my knees and scraping away the dirt. My pick struck the same object, and the metallic sound assured me that it was indeed a gold nugget. Presently I got the dirt cleared away, and a yellow surface flashed before my eyes. I leaned back against the earth and panted for breath.

"It's a nugget, Laurens, sure enough, and a monstrous one," I gasped.

Laurens got down on his knees by my side, and we went to work to extract the precious piece of metal from its hiding place. We soon succeeded, and the mass of shining gold lay before us.

"Well," said Laurens, wiping the sweat from his brow; "our fortunes are made. If we had this nugget safe in San Francisco it would bring us enough to make us independent for life."

"How much do you suppose it is worth?" I asked.

"I don't know. Ten thousand at the least, and likely a good deal more. We must get this down to Frisco at once, for our lives would not be safe here a day if the miners knew of our luck. There are plenty of them who would think nothing of taking our lives for the sake of this nugget."

We decided to start for San Francisco immediately with our treasure. Wrapping it up in an old sack, we slung it across our shoulders like an ordinary budget, and commenced our journey. As night approached, we encamped in a little valley at the base of a cliff. Hungry and tired, Laurens flung his pack carelessly upon the ground by his side. While we were eating a hasty and not very abundant supper three horsemen rode up the valley, dismounted, and approached us. There was nothing remarkable in their appearance, and I supposed them to be only ordinary travellers.

"Hello, strangers, can you give us a bite? We're about fagged out," said one of the new-comers.

"We haven't very much, but we'll share what we have with you," answered Laurens.

One of the men stooped suddenly and picked up the budget containing the nugget.

"I say, stranger, this is a confounded heavy pack of yours," he said.

Laurens glanced at me, but answered carelessly:

"Yes—it contains some mining tools and the like."

"Mining tools, eh? Well, I guess we'll take charge of 'em for awhile," said the stranger.

"Drop that budget instantly," said Laurens, drawing his revolver. Before he could use it, one of the other robbers—for such they were—fired, and poor Laurens fell back with a ball through his heart. I fired my revolver at the villains, and one of them fell dead. The other two fled to their horses, carrying the gold nugget with them. In a moment they were out of sight. They belonged to a band of robbers who made it their business to murder and rob unwary miners.

I was left alone in the deepening twilight with the dead body of my friend. I scooped out a shallow grave in the loose sand, and buried it as decently as I could. I left the dead robber undisturbed where he fell, for the wolves and vultures to feast and fatten upon.

I was now alone in a strange land, with scarcely money enough to buy subsistence for a week. I resolved to go down to Sacramento, with a letter to my sweetheart, and see if there was one awaiting me from her—for I had written her to direct all her letters to that place. There was one, sure enough. Ruth assured me of her eternal constancy, and said she prayed daily for my safe return. She said that a wonderful change had taken place in Dave Parsons; he had quit drinking, and was getting to be a very steady, industrious young man.

After mailing my letter, I started back to the mines, hoping to find another nugget where Laurens and I had been so successful. But I was disappointed. Day after day I toiled in the shaft without discovering anything. At last I was forced to leave the place, or starve—my provisions were all gone, and I had no money with which to buy more.

Tired and discouraged, I abandoned the shaft, and hired to dig for one of the other miners for a trifling remuneration. My employer was a middle-aged man, coarse and hard-featured. I disliked him instinctively. The earth in the shaft he was working was rich in gold, and I knew the man must have a large sum. One day I was working alone in the pit; my employer was away somewhere on business. Digging listlessly at the rough clay, wondering when I would obtain the fortune that was to enable me to buy a home and marry Ruth Farley, I heard my pick strike a metallic substance; I knew at once what it was. Clearing the dirt away eagerly, I drew forth a lump of gold—not near as large as the one Laurens and I had been robbed of, but still a nugget worth thousands of dollars. A wild thought flashed through my brain—here, in this one piece of yellow metal was wealth enough to place me forever above want—why should I not take it and flee? No one would ever know it—was it not mine anyhow, since I was the discoverer? I was almost resolved to secure the gold and depart at once, when another vision arose in my mind—a vision of a little girl with fair face and mournful eyes—and a childish voice sounded in my ears—

"You mustn't steal anything, Seth—it's *awful* wicked!"

The nugget belonged to my employer, not to me. I could not take it. I was paid so much per day for my work, and that only was justly mine. I tossed the nugget into one corner, covered it up, and worked away as if nothing had happened. When the owner of the shaft returned and discovered his luck, he gave me ten dollars as a reward for my honesty. The next day I left him, and wandered down to Sacramento once more. Disgusted with mining, I secured work in the town at good wages; and nearly every time the mail arrived I went to look for a letter from my sweetheart. None came. Months passed, and still no tidings. I grew terribly anxious, but continued to write regularly. I knew the distance was long, the mails uncertain; there were many chances for letters to be lost, and I never doubted my darling's constancy.

At last a letter came. I opened it eagerly and read, while my heart grew like lead in my breast. It ran as follows:

"Mr. Skinner—I find that I made a mistake in supposing I loved you. I did not know my own heart. Since you have been gone, I have discovered that I care nothing for you, only as a friend. I have learned to love another—one who is in every way fitted to win the affections of a young girl. I am sorry for you, Seth, but you will soon forget me. Do not write any more, as it will not be proper for me to receive your letters, now that I am engaged to another man. Forgive me if you can, and I will remain your friend,

"RUTH FARLEY."

Scarcely knowing what I did, I folded the letter carefully, and placed it in my pocket-book. I was completely stunned by its contents. Ruth false—Ruth, on whose truth and honor I would have staked my life, going to marry another man? Then what was there for me to live for? The sooner I died and was out of such a miserable world the better, I said to myself.

Still thinking that there might be some mistake—that the letter might be a forgery—I wrote two or three times more; but when, after waiting a reasonable and then an unreasonable time for a reply, none came, I gave up to despair, and ceased to write.

Having no object in life, I roamed from one place to another, and at last took to a hermit's life in the mountains. I tried to forget Ruth Farley, but I could not; her fair face was ever before me, and as she proved false, I resolved never to look upon one of the sex again.

I passed two years in my wild, solitary mountain-home. It was now more than three years since I had left the States. One evening as I sat in my little hut, before a blazing fire, for the nights are chilly in California, even in the Summer—there came a knock at the door, and a stranger walked in, requesting a night's lodging. I made him welcome, of course, and we sat together before the cheerful blaze. There was something familiar in the stranger's face, and I observed—

"You remind me of a young man I used to know at home—his name was Jim Ackley."

"That's my name, stranger, and I hail from —— county, New York."

"How long have you been in California?"

"Just arrived a few days ago. Come up here to look for gold, and got lost."

"Did you know a family by the name of Parsons—a widow and her son?"

"Widow Parsons, and her son Dave? Knew 'em well, and the young woman that lives with 'em—Ruth Farley, the purtiest girl in the county."

"Wasn't she married when you left?" I asked, deeply interested.

"Married? No, but Dave Parsons is trying his best to get her. They say she's waiting for a lover that ran away to California, and never was heard of again—Seth Skinner was his name, I guess."

"I am the man," I said, reaching out my hand to my old acquaintance.

"Seth Skinner? why so it is, but you've got such a beard that your best friend wouldn't know you. I tell you, though, that if you want to marry that gal of your'n you had better go home at once, for Dave Parsons is doing his purtiest to win her."

We sat up and talked nearly all night, and resolved to go into the mining business together. As soon as we accumulated a decent sum, we intended to return to the East, and I hoped to be in time to spoil Dave Parsons's pretty game. Ruth was still true to me, and the letter that caused me so much misery was doubtless forged by my unprincipled cousin.

In the morning we procured some mining tools and went to work in a wild, rocky gulch, where there were good indications of gold. We were successful beyond our expectations, and in a month we had secured enough to make us independent for life. We carried it safely to San Francisco, turned it into ready money, and took passage on a homeward-bound steamer. This was before the days of the Pacific railroad, and the overland route was too dangerous to be travelled much.

IV.

The shades of a November night were falling fast, as Jim Ackley and I got off the cars at the railroad, and started on foot for the old Parsons homestead, a distance of two or three miles. It was a whim of mine to go there as soon as possible, in spite of darkness and approaching storm, and I persuaded my friend to accompany me.

We stalked over the rough, muddy road with long strides. The darkness became intense, and soon the rain commenced pouring down in torrents. The wind howled mournfully through the leafless forest, and the owls hooted dismally at each other from the tree-tops. It was a wild, wild night, and my friend began to shiver, for the drenching rain wet us to the skin.

"Heavens!" said Ackley, "it's getting worse and worse. There's a house ahead; we may as well stop and wait till morning."

"You can stop, if you like, but I shall go on. I don't believe in presentiments, but something tells me that if I don't reach my aunt's to-night, something bad will happen."

"Anxiety to see your sweetheart, that's all," laughed Ackley. "But if you're determined to go, I'll go with you. It isn't much further, and an old gold-digger needn't be afraid of a little rain."

We tramped steadily forward without speaking. Soon the familiar outlines of the old farm-house were in sight. The windows were brilliantly lighted; something unusual appeared to be going on inside. We went in at the rickety gate, up the path, and stopped a moment on the porch to shake ourselves. Ackley looked through one of the windows a moment, and then turned and caught my arm. He seemed to be greatly excited.

"By Heaven, Seth," he said, "there's a wedding going on in there."

I looked through the glass a moment, and saw Dave Parsons standing up before a minister, and Ruth Farley stood by his side, dressed in white.

"Follow me, Jim," I said. "We're not a moment too soon."

I burst open the door unceremoniously, and entered the room, followed by my friend.

"Hold!" I said to the minister. "I forbid this marriage."

There were several guests present. All eyes turned upon us. Drenched with rain, our hats lopped over our faces and our heavy boots covered with mud, we were strange looking wedding-guests.

"Who are you?" shrieked my aunt, springing from her seat. My cousin turned pale and sank into a chair. Ruth Farley took a step forward, and stood looking at me with wild, wide-open eyes. I went to her side, and grasped her ice-cold hand.

"Ruth, don't you know me?" I said. "It is I, Seth Skinner, come back to you loving and true. It is for you to say whether this marriage shall go on. If you have ceased to love me—if you love my cousin—I have nothing more to say. I will leave you and never look upon your face again. But, if you have been deceived—if you still care for me—no power on earth shall take you from me. Speak, Ruth—these folks are curious to know what this scene means."

Ruth drew from her bosom a worn and faded letter. "Read that," she said, giving it to me. I unfolded the sheet. It was in my own handwriting, and ran as follows:

"SACRAMENTO, Cal., June 5, 185—.

"Miss Ruth Farley—When I parted from you, a year ago, I fancied that I loved you; but I know now that it was only fancy. Since I came here I have met a lady whom I love ten times more than I ever could you. She is wealthy and beautiful, and will be a fitting match for me—for I am a rich man now. Forget me, Ruth, as soon as you can, and marry my Cousin Dave; he would be glad enough to get you. You need not write to me any more, as I shall not answer your letters. I sign myself, your friend,

"SETH SKINNER."

"As God hears me Ruth, I never wrote that letter," I said. "Here is one which I received from you, but which I now believe to be a forgery, like the other."

I took from an inner pocket the letter which had caused me so much misery and handed it to Ruth. She perused it, her cheeks growing red and her eyes flashing with anger.

"I never saw that letter before," she said, "There has been foul play somewhere."

"Yes, and yonder is the author of all this villainy," I said, pointing to Dave Parsons, who was now as pale as a ghost. "Liar, forger, scoundrel! you thought to part two loving hearts, and you were well-nigh successful; but, thank Heaven, I returned in time to thwart your schemes."

"Leave this house!" roared Dave, standing over his mother's chair. My aunt was too much astonished to speak, but sat staring at me with wide-open eyes.

"Ruth," I whispered, grasping her hand, "do you still love me?"

"I have always loved you, Seth. Even when I thought you false, I did not cease to love you. But I was too proud to let the world know that I was broken-hearted, and I at last yielded to your cousin's entreaties, and consented to be his wife. God be thanked that you arrived in time to prevent the marriage. In five minutes I would have been that scoundrel's wife."

"It was a lucky escape. My darling, you are dressed as a bride—why not become my wife at once? I am a poor man no longer—I have enough to support us both in comfort. The minister and the guests are waiting; say yes, Ruth, and we will stand up and be made husband and wife."

"If you wish it, Seth, I will not say no," replied Ruth.

I took the minister aside, and explained the situation. He consented to perform the ceremony. I took Ruth's hand, and the minister said the words that bound us to each other until death.

By this time my aunt had recovered her senses, and her anger knew no bounds.

"You shall leave my house at once," she screamed. "Not another night—not another hour shall this shameless girl pass under my roof. Seth Skinner take your wife and begone; and may Heaven's curse rest on you both for your base ingratitude."

"Madame," interposed the minister, "the storm outside is fearful. You surely will not drive the young lady from your house to-night?"

"She shall go, storm or no storm. She has broken my son's heart, and darkened my own life. Begone, I say, and never darken my door again."

"My carriage is outside," said the minister; "Mr. Skinner, you and your wife, and your friend shall go home with me and spend the night. The storm is abating, and as the moon is up we can easily make the journey."

I thankfully accepted the good man's invitation. Ruth and I spent several days at the minister's house—until I purchased and fitted up a house of my own. Jim Ackley lived with us until he married a little golden-haired girl and bought an establishment of his own.

When he found that Ruth was lost to him, Dave Parsons took to drinking worse than ever. He is married now, but between her drunken husband and her sharp-tongued mother-in-law, his poor wife leads a sorrowful life.

WHAT JACK MOSTYN
LOST AND WON AT A FAIR.

BY EDITH SPICER JAY.

CHAPTER I.

WHAT HE LOST.

They loved each other; there wasn't the least doubt of that; but she, Cissy Devereux, was pretty, self-willed, and something of an heiress; and he, Jack Mostyn, poor, proud, and slightly suspicious in consequence.

Cissy was eighteen, and Jack three-and-twenty, and both were full of the extravagance of youth, imperious and sensitive, intolerant of the least wrong or slight—real or supposed—and expecting everything to yield, he, to his first brave attack, she, to her pretty commands and cajoleries.

This view of life might not perhaps have done them any great harm, if applied only to the outer world—they might soon have learned the need of patience, as well as pluck and coaxing, without any very terrible suffering; but, unluckily, they were just as exacting with each other. Cissy would "amuse herself," as she said (though I don't think she really found much amusement in it,) by making Jack jealous, just as if he were a comfortable, complacent "eligible," instead of the saddest of detrimentals;" and he, for his part, rarely struck a just balance between over-exaction, and a morbid spirit of self-sacrifice, which prompted him not to "spoil her prospects." He forgot that when two people really love each other, they have one self between them, with which nothing ought to be done without mutual consent.

However, everything, barring an occasional tiff, had gone pretty smoothly till the incidents I am about to record. One day, early in the season, Jack Mostyn was standing by the Park rails, leaning into the Devereux's carriage, talking very softly, saying most stupid and disjointed things, and making much more use of his eyes than it had ever occurred to him to do before. Indeed, he looked different altogether, thought the lady who was the cause thereof—and who happened to be alone to-day—softer, and yet, if possible, more manly than usual; he was not afraid to look her in the face—nay, he looked so fixedly and fondly that he frightened away her coquetries: and the crimson banner, presaging conquest of the citadel, began to flatter on her cheeks, and a traitor word or two stole out from between her parted lips, and her blue eyes glanced from under their black curtain of lashes, half welcoming, half afraid.

A small incident had brought on this crisis—they had met at a ball the night before, and Cissy, who was perfectly rash and fearless, had induced Mostyn to dance with a Miss Laurence, who was a great friend of hers, at least, *she*, Cissy, thought so.

Now Jack was good-looking—half gentle, half stern, wholly manly, irritatingly pre-occupied; and Miss Laurence, who was accustomed to be at least "great friends" with men in general, and to make them laugh a good deal, was piqued by his vacant smiles and indifferent remarks.

She was not a very nice girl, Nora Laurence, not over scrupulous, and by arts best known to herself she managed to detain Mr. Mostyn much longer than he wished, or Cissy could tolerate.

If he had been half a dozen years older, he would have got away easily enough; but he was inexperienced in young ladies—thought them all good and refined, and could not bear to discomfort or humiliate them.

Of course Cissy quarrelled with him, on principle; but she was sensible enough, this time, to consent to make it up at the last moment; and the sole result of the evening's emotions, and Miss Laurence's machinations, was a pair of extremely sentimental-looking legs outside the carriage, and two heads, one small and black and wavy, given to toss itself, and another massive and fair, in close proximity within.

As to Nora Laurence, she rode past on a very screwy hired hack, feeling exceedingly evil-tempered, hating poor little innocent Cissy, and in a contradictory manner, feeling something quite opposite toward the real offender, if there were one at all. She hated to be resisted—what did Cissy, who was an heiress, want with a poor man like Jack Mostyn?

Whereas Cissy's theory was simply to this effect—

"*If I've* got the money, why then of course *he* doesn't want any!" At which the prudent world lifted hands of horror.

"Then you won't tell me if you think you ever *could?*" spoken in an honest voice that deepened very tenderly, and with a glance half shy, half bold—shyly conscious of unworthiness, bold in the knowledge of the depth and faith of the affection it proffered; spoken, not without hope, for when a man of Jack Mostyn's masterful character gives voice to such a question, the "ever" is probably not far off to his imagination.

"Not now. I'll tell you the day after to-morrow, at the fair. You shall buy your answer, in a letter at the post-office."

After which sentence, uttered in an expiring struggle for majesty and indifference, Miss Devereux anticipated the promised answer by lifting two large eyes to his, and returning, ever so faintly, the clasp of his determined hand.

Then she said, with excessive severity, to make up for this momentary lapse, "Will you be kind enough to tell the servants to go home, Mr. Mostyn?"

And Jack, having obeyed her, walked away, quite alarmingly happy, and endeavoring in vain to sober himself by ordinary means.

At the fair (for the benefit of some distinguished institution), the stronger sex the weaker, for once, trampled, cajoled, talked into, looked into impecuniosity—at least, so they say they are on these occasions—much millinery, many scents, various pretty faces, sunshine, flowers, flirtations, crashing music of a military band.

"Oh, isn't it nice!" said Cissy, radiantly. She looked like a rosebud, all in pink, with a big natural rose in her bonnet, and the brightest blush on her cheeks.

Everybody bought of the little witch, who was a dreadfully experienced shopwoman—a knot of dejected, penniless beings hung round her stall, and plead abjectly to be allowed to run into debt; the best match present, Lord Lington, came meekly to be snubbed.

Cissy was in the highest spirits, and just a little wicked and coquettish in consequence, though, poor child! nearly all her happiness arose from the fact that Jack was coming.

She did not know it, and would have rebutted the idea indignantly; but it was true.

He was very late. "I'll punish him!" said this naughty girl; a process, unless you are a cold-blooded animal, which generally ends in punishing yourself much more.

But Cissy was daring, and had a greater idea than ever of her own majesty to-day, because her court was so large and servile. So when Mostyn came up ruffled, firstly, because he was late; secondly, because he knew his beloved would, as she said, "give him a wigging" for it, and it really was not his fault, but made him quite as angry as it did her; thirdly, because he found her surrounded with men, when he came up, showing his disgust in his face, shouldering sulkily through the crowd, and pushing past Lord Lington, presented himself at her stall, his reception was a pert "Well, everything is sold."

"I hope not," responded he forgetting his defence; she was so pretty, and smiling down on her in a possessive manner, which hurt her independence, though it was manly and fond enough, "I *couldn't* come before, I—"

"Before? Before when?" she said innocently.

"Before now."

"Oh, dear! I'm sure *I* didn't notice whether you were in the room or not," cried Miss Cissy, with a toss, and a mocking appealing look at her circle of admirers.

Thereupon ensued a covert quarrel, to the great amusement of those lookers-on close enough to perceive it.

It was a proof that Jack was "thorough," and to be trusted, that though he went away from Miss Devereux's counter in a very unpleasant temper, crimson in the face, and unspeakably cross to innocent sellers who beset his path, he returned the next minute to ask, with somewhat sulky reproach,—

"May I get my letter from the post-office, all the same?" There was something generous in his look and tone which made his little torturer's eyes droop, to hide two half-penitent, half-angry tears; but she kept up her dignity, as she conceived, and only answered carelessly, "Yes, you can, if you like."

He went away, without another word, she, safe in the knowledge that a certain document which she had written and entrusted to her friend Miss Laurence (who was acting postmistress) would set all right, and bring him to her feet, repentant and enraptured, continued her duties.

As to Jack, he went to the post-office, laid down his half-crown, and demanded a letter rather cavalierly. He instinctively disliked Miss Laurence, and he was now painfully pre-occupied.

"Cissy gave it me. She wrote it herself, you know," said that young person with an air of intelligence.

"Thanks," said Jack, curtly, avoiding her eye. He was of a laudably reserved disposition, not given to indiscriminate confidences, and he took his letter and walked away to open it unobserved.

He read it through twice, turned it over, looked at it upside down, with an air of unbelief, then stood still, crushing it hard in his hand. He was very white, his eyes wide open, and had altogether much the aspect of a child who finds out a grown-up person in a deception.

It was just as impossible and awful to him that the sweet words, and blushes, and glances of months past should have been so many falsehoods—that the proof lay here, in his hand—a refusal, not only cold, but mocking, such as she might have written to the acquaintance of a week. Yet here it was, in her pretty, delicate writing.

He didn't believe it, simply, at first; not from vanity about himself, but from trust in her; his misery might have been absurd, only it was so still and earnest. He was obliged to believe it at last, and then, being three and twenty, he despaired of ever believing in anything good or true again.

Suddenly, a passionate hope that was almost fear, sprung up in his heart, and he turned round, upsetting a flower-stall, dashed back to the post-office, and said, as *he* thought, with unconcern, but really in a threatening manner—

"You're sure you gave me the right letter, Miss Laurence?"

His face might have moved her, it was so brave, and yet so imploring; but alas! it did not.

"Of course," said she, coldly. "I hope it's not an unpleasant one. Cissy wrote it; but then she *can* be disagreeable, though you don't think so."

"No, I don't," said he, chivalrously; but with a terrible effort. "But you are sure it is for me?"

"Of course; it was directed to you, as you saw. Now, Mr. Mostyn, you ought to stay and talk to me; you have not been near me."

"I'm going away," he answered sternly. "Good-afternoon, Miss Laurence."

He strode through the crowd without seeing anybody: for all his wrath, his love was too strong; he could not help casting one last look back at her.

She did not perceive it—if she had, what misery might not have been averted! She was smiling and talking to Lord Lington; smiling, poor Cissy, at the thought of how happy Jack must be by this time, how he had read her letter, and forgiven her, and how they could never quarrel again.

"Good-bye, darling," he said, fiercely in his heart, and was gone.

That evening, Miss Nora Laurence, having locked her room door, took a letter out of her pocket, and read with deliberation these words, in Cissy Devereux's handwriting:—

"I *do* love you, and am ever, if you will,
"Your own Cissy."

Miss Laurence tore it into very little bits, and threw them into the grate.

"Not too reserved," said she, knitting her brows. "Little fool! to jump at my idea of writing a refusal to catch some anonymous lady-killer. She'll not stand in my way with him again."

What Cissy suffered about the poor little document thus destroyed, and its extraordinary reception, I cannot describe. For a long time every knock at the hall-door sent her heart into her mouth. Mortified and angry, she felt at first none of his despair, but fully expected him to come a penitent to her feet.

But time passed, and her wrath died in the sickness of waiting; she said to herself it was all her fault—(it is so much happier to believe yourself in the wrong than a person you love.) Alas, he gave her no chance of saying so; he avoided the Park, and every place where he might possibly meet her, and after a week or two rejoined his regiment in the North. She might have bowed her pride so far as to ask an explanation of his conduct, but before she could bring herself to do so, she heard a report which rendered this impossible.

She met Miss Laurence (whom it had never occurred to her to distrust) at a kettle-drum; and that young lady, drawing her aside, pressing her hand with officious sympathy, and looking keenly in her face, said—

"*Dear* Cissy, I have something to tell you."

Cissy felt what it was at once, and nerved herself to bear it. She drew herself up, fixed her blue eyes on Nora's face, and with a passionate flush on her cheeks and a voice which did not quiver, but only grew a little lower and clearer than usual, answered with affected carelessness—

"Something very dreadful, to judge by your face, Nora."

"I *fear* so," returned Miss Laurence impressively, then added with a sudden gush of sentiment, "Oh, Cissy, I *wish* you wouldn't try to hide your sorrow from me; but would let me sym—"

"*Sorrow!*" cried Cissy, rebutting the accusation with as much indignation as if her kind friend had said murder or theft. "What nonsense! Tell me your wonderful news, Nora."

"So I will, dear love. I shouldn't keep you in suspense, it's *cruel*."

With which tender words, Miss Laurence, casting down her eyes, as if to avoid the spectacle of her companion's anguish, and sighing deeply, said—

"Mr. Mostyn is engaged to be married."

"Who to?" asked Cissy, wishing to have it all at once.

"A Miss Stevens. Very handsome, and with money—a North-country heiress."

"Oh, I am very glad," said Cissy, quivering, and with a perhaps pardonable disregard of truth. "It is very nice for him."

About two months after which little scene the papers announced the marriage of the Earl of Lington to Miss Cecilia Devereux.

An obscure subaltern, alone, far off in country-quarters, saw it, and tossed the Times from him, and sat for hours with his head on his hands, wondering at the world and all in it. When he rose up at last, it was to take the first steps toward an exchange, to go on foreign service.

CHAPTER II.

WHAT HE WON.

Eight years and many changes: Lord Lington recently dead; his widow very poor for a countess; Nora Laurence married to an elderly Indian judge who adored and trusted her, and had worked a miracle on her hardened nature by force of love; Jack Mostyn a major, with honorable scars, and what is rarer, substantial rewards for them. His profession had become almost his life, for no other love, no pleasure or dissipation, had consoled him for his first disappointment. But the tree grew as the sapling had been bent; though thus sternly faithful, he was old and hard before his time, doubtful of the truth of his fellow-creatures, and perfectly invulnerable to the blandishments of the marriageable detachments that kept coming out to the "delectable land" of forlorn damsels.

He had been in India eight years—had meant to be there all his life, for his nearest relations were dead, and the rest scattered or married; but an accidental meeting with Lady Ross, née Nora Laurence, a private interview, a tearful confession, the result of her own happiness, had altered his intention.

He knew all now—the cruel deception that had ruined Cissy's life, and his—knew it too late; and he could only say, hardly, he would *try* to forgive the woman who had planned it. He thought he would go home to look once more, himself unseen, on the face dearest in the world to him, dearest even when he believed it a beautiful lie; see it happy most likely, with a happiness in which he had no share, and then return, and die in exile.

At first a dire temptation beset him to let Cissy know what he knew, to take away at least the stain that must rest on him in her eyes; but a tenderer and kinder thought conquered.

"It would only give her useless pain," he said to himself. "No, let her be happy, and love her husband more, and think him truer, because I was so false. And as to that woman, may God forgive her better than I can!"

He came home; so many of his friends were married or dead it seemed as if fifty years had passed instead of eight; but the green meadows, and woods, and streams were the same, and touched his heart with unspoken welcome. It was only the third day after his arrival that a friend persuaded him to go down to a fair at Twickenham. He consented, for anything that distracted his heavy thoughts was a relief. Cissy and England were so connected in his heart, he kept falling into old ways, and woke to tear asunder those two tender names with a start and an effort.

He strolled through the fair, bought a few things out of idleness, stopped sometimes, in a sad dream of the past—of his young belief, and resolve, and passion, his desire for fame, which he had in a measure won now, and which was not what it had seemed then; and all recollections and longings gathered themselves into one complaint—the language of many a successful—"Oh for youth, love, poverty back again!"

Suddenly, as he strolled on, his eye caught the words "Post-Office" on a stall draped so lavishly with white and pink, that nothing could be seen of the presumedly fair official within save a white hand that stole forth tantalizingly from an aperture left for that purpose.

The sight sent a thrill of pleasure and pain through Major Mostyn, the pain he understood well enough; but not the pleasure, so he turned and asked a man he knew slightly, who chanced to be standing near, who kept the post-office.

The answer sent the blood over his face, and thrilled through all his being like a new elixir of life.

"The Countess of Lington. She's a widow now."

He forgot his wise, middle-aged doubts and resolves: he forgot that she, Cissy, most likely did not know the explanation of the old fatal mystery, and would be justly indignant at his presenting himself before her; he forgot everything; the cords between his heart and hers, unbroken by sorrow and separation, drew him where she stood, doing her duties languidly, glad to be unseen.

Scarcely a week after her marriage she had learned that the story of Jack's engagement was a falsehood; shortly before her husband's death she had received a letter from Lady Ross confessing fully her past treachery. But it had all come too late, she said to herself in frozen despair; Jack must be married, or, at all events, have forgotten to love her.

She had not been the less a good wife to Lington while he lived, nor a true, though not passionate mourner when he died. Only, she was listless, and cared little about any thing, had grown weary of her life, which had begun so brightly, and turned out such a failure.

Some friends having teased her to assist in the fair, she had preferred to take the post-office, and had begged to be out of sight, so as to avoid a good deal of the usual badinage. She was sitting down to rest for a moment, when a voice outside—a voice harsh with deep emotion, but sweeter, more wonderful than the sweetest music to her ears, said slowly,

"Is there a letter *for me?*"

She had recognized his first breath, as it were; she did not know he had omitted to mention his name, and he was unconscious of it: both were suddenly rapt with the wonder and bliss of each other's presence and nearness, were silent for a moment, to feel the blessing of it. It was like rain on a thirsty land, like sweetest food to starving lips, like its mother's voice to a lost child.

She spoke at last, faintly,

"There will be one—in a moment," said she.

And Major Mostyn drew back, and leaned against the wall patiently, smiling to himself, and with his eyes full of light, looking somewhere far away over the heads of the crowd. People standing near, said jestingly, he looked as if he were praying: and I think they were not so far wrong as they themselves imagined.

Behind the pink-calico drapery two trembling hands were trying to steady a scrap of paper, to make a little useless gold pencil amend two lives, marred by means as light; two blue eyes raining down dews of praise and thanksgiving.

A whisper issued at last from the pink temple of mystery.

"Your letter." And it slid out like a first snowdrop, harbinger of spring and summer profusion.

"What I value most in the world shall pay for it. Nothing else should have taken it from me," said Jack, whose presence of mind had come back to him, and he laid an emerald ring on the palm tremblingly outstretched.

It was one he had given her long ago, which she had returned without a word directly after their first quarrel.

"I shall come back for my change," added he, walking away.

He could not read it there among the spectators, who began to observe some peculiarities in the demeanor of Major Mostyn, and an unbusiness-like flutter on the part of the postmistress. He went out of the room, into the grounds away from the band and the people, into a shady avenue of limes, where he opened the envelope with hope made painful by the recollection of past despair.

"If you remember a cruel mistake we both made years ago, and care to have it explained, wait in the lime avenue in the garden till I come. Oh, Jack, I *was* true till I thought you were false.

"CISSY."

It had been written with many tender tears, a drop or two fell slowly on it now, and Major Mostyn stood still, and covered his face.

"Presently a light step came up behind him, a timid hand touched his arm, and a faltering voice, with a tear and a smile in it, said,

"Jack!"

It was only one word; but it meant a great deal.

They were not Major Mostyn, the woman-hater, hard, cynical, suspicious; and Cecilia, Countess of Lington, pretty, polished, heartless, who stood there, with pride, and doubt, and conventionality between them; but Jack and Cissy, who fell into each other's arms, who clung and kissed, and drew apart to gaze in each other's faces, and clasped the closer, and murmured broken words of fondness, till it seemed as if it had been almost worth while to be parted, to feel *this*.

They went in arm-in-arm, to the great amazement of their acquaintance; and they were married two months afterward. And though Jack Mostyn still talks with interest of his profession, there is no subject on which he dwells with such deep emotion, and tenderness, and thankfulness, as on this story of what he lost and won at a fair.

A WOMAN'S ADVENTURE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

I've often read and heard of moments of terror. I know now what it is to experience the sensation of staring what seems to you to be death square in the face.

Shall I tell you about it? Well, sit down and I will tell you how it was before John comes home to tea. It'll help pass away the time while we're waiting for him, maybe.

You see, John was foreman of the night hands in the factory for a long time. He went to the factory at six, and came home at five o'clock in the morning. I had to stay at home alone; leastwise 'twas about the same as alone. There's the child, there, she was company, but for all the help she'd been in any trouble I might as well have been alone, you know.

I never was afraid of burglars, 'cause you see we hadn't anything worth a burglar's notice. We didn't hear much about thieves and the like then. Since then, they've got to be plenty enough. Not being afraid, I was willing to stay alone, and used to feel as safe as you please. John used to coax me to let him get a big boy, or a big dog, but Lord bless you, I didn't want to be bothered with either one of 'em! I'd rather run the risk of the burglars.

One day a friend of John's, who'd been at work in the factory a good spell, and was a saving fellow, who didn't spend what he earned in drinking and carousing as a good many of the hands did, got tired of the work he'd been at so long, and said he was going to quit it, and look about him, and see if he couldn't find a snug little farm somewhere, that he could get with the money he'd saved. You see, I know well enough what that meant. There'd been a pretty smart girl at work in the factory, that he'd took a great fancy to, and for that matter she thought as much of him, and I knew that he wanted to find a nice little home to take his wife to. Well, he brought his money to us, and wanted we should keep it for him till he wanted to use it. There was about a thousand dollars in all. John told him he'd better put it in the bank, where it would be safer, and be growing a trifle, but he said he calculated to use it as soon as he found the place to suit him, and he'd as soon it would be with us as anywhere.

So he left it, and John put it in the left-hand till of that old blue chest that you see in the corner, there. I always shall think the man was a-looking in the window, and saw John put it there—but laud! I'm getting ahead of my story.

One night John went off to the factory, and left me alone as usual. It was dark and rainy. The wind blew in great gusts, and the bushes against the window then kept up a rustle that made me nervous and fidgety.

The child there was about two years old then. I sung to her and told her stories, and by and by she began to get sleepy, and I undressed her and put her to bed. I sat up a spell after that and knit on some socks for John, and at last I began to get sleepy myself.

Well, I went to bed, and I know I slept about two hours, for it was somewhere near ten o'clock when I went to bed, and the clock striking twelve woke me up.

I heard a step in the hall. It sounded heavy and different from John's, and the sound of it made me wide awake in a minute.

At first I thought I'd get up and find out who was there, and what was wanted. Then I thought perhaps I'd better keep still a spell and see what happened.

The step came up to the door, and then I heard a hand on the knob, and some one turned it as gently as possible and pushed open the door. As the door swung open the light from a lantern came in through the aperture.

You'd better believe I was scared. I didn't dare to stir nor scream. I first lay still, and looked out of the least bit of a crack in my eyelids. A great, burly fellow that had been a hand in the mill some time back, I knew, the minute I saw him, came in and held up his lantern so it could shine on me. I shut my eyes tight then. He came close up to the bed and stood and watched me for a little while, with the light shining square on my face. It was terrible! I didn't dare to move a muscle. I was in agony for fear the child would wake up. I've no doubt he'd have killed us. I tell you, sir, you've no idea what a trial it is to lie still and be in mortal fear all the time, thinking every minute may be your last.

By and by he seemed satisfied that I was sound asleep, and he lowered the lantern and went over to the blue chest. I tell you, sir, I breathed easier when he turned away from the bed. I just opened my eyes the least bit to watch him. I saw him bend over the chest and try several keys in the lock before he found one that fitted. By and by he got one that would open it, and he unlocked the chest and turned back the cover. And then he opened the till and turned up some cloth that I had put over it, and took out the money that Benny Green had left with us for safe keeping.

You'd better believe I felt terrible, when I saw what he was after. I knew, you see, just what an awful loss that money'd be to poor Benny. It was as much as I could do to keep from screaming, but I knew that wouldn't do the least bit of good, so I kept still.

Well, after he took out that money he shut the till, put down the cover, and then held out his lantern toward the bed to be sure I was sleeping. He seemed satisfied that I was sound asleep, for he lowered the lantern, and turned and went out of the door. I supposed he'd go directly out of the house, but he went in the direction of the cellar. The cellar-door was right at the end of the hall from the front-door.

I got up as still as you please, and crept to the kitchen-door and looked out. He had opened the cellar-door, and was looking down.

Quick as a cat and about as still, I sprang toward him, and before you could have said Jack Robinson, I had given him a push that sent him tumbling headlong down the cellar stairs, and then I swung the great, thick oak door together, and slipped in the bolts. Then I knew I had him. There wasn't any way of getting out of that cellar, except through that door.

My! such cursing as that man did make was enough to make your blood run cold. But I didn't stop long to listen to them. I hurried on a dress, took the baby and wrapped her up well, and then I started with her for the factory. I got there, and told my story, and John and half a dozen others came back with me, and captured the man.

And so you see I saved Benny's money after all. But I wouldn't let John work in the factory of nights, after that. There's John's step, now.

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

[Any of the following works—or any other book—will be forwarded by mail by the proprietors of THE POST on receipt of the regular retail price. *Address H. Peterson & Co., 319 Walnut St., Philadelphia.*

Publishers are requested always to state the retail price of their books when sending them to be noticed.

OFF THE SKELLIGS. A Novel. By JEAN INGELOW. Published by Roberts Brothers, Boston: and also for sale by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philadelphia. Price, $1.75.

A LONELY LIFE. By J. A. ST. JOHN BLYTHE, author of "Wise as a Serpent." Published by T. B. Peterson & Bros., Philadelphia. Price, $1.75, in morocco cloth, gilt back.

REPORT MADE TO THE PHILADELPHIA SOCIETY FOR ALLEVIATING THE MISERIES OF PUBLIC PRISONS, ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS—Held in Middle Temple Hall, London, July, 1872. By Jos. R. CHANDLER, one of the Vice Presidents of the Society, and its delegate to the Congress. Philadelphia.

MAJOR JONES'S COURTSHIP. Revised and Enlarged. With Illustrations, by Cary. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philadelphia.

BESSIE. A Novel. By JULIA KAVANAGH. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York. also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philadelphia.

HALF-HOUR RECREATIONS IN POPULAR SCIENCE. No. 5. This contains a paper upon Spectrum Analysis Discoveries, by Prof. H. Schellen, and also one upon Coral and Coral Islands, by Prof. J. D. Dana. Published by Estes & Lauriat, Boston; and also for sale by Porter & Coates, Philadelphia.

A CONCORDANCE TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA; with a Classified Index, and Questions for Educational Purposes. By CHARLES W. STERNS, M.D. Published by Mason, Baker & Pratt, New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philadelphia.

THE BRITISH QUARTERLY REVIEW. October, 1872. American edition. Published by the Leonard Scott Publishing Co., New York; and also for sale by W. B. Zieber, Philadelphia.

THE JOURNAL OF THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE for November. Published by the Franklin Institute at their Hall, Philadelphia.

THE LIFE AND PUBLIC SERVICES OF MAJOR-GENERAL MEADE. Published by T. B. Peterson & Bros., Philadelphia.

APPLETON'S RAILWAY AND STEAM NAVIGATION GUIDE, for November. Price 25 cents. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York.

☞ Now have come the days of meteorological prophecy. Now the muskrats, as usual at this season, vaticinate. Now they give us to understand that the present winter is to be an open one. This they do by delaying to break ground for their winter residences—while last year at this time they had their huts built large, high and thick. But in West Virginia they scornfully reject the "probabilities" of the muskrat, and swear by the doings and diggings of the ground-hog. We shall probably have a winter like all the past winters; it will be like they have been, the "most remarkable for seventy years." And still another ancient character has made his annual appearance, and is travelling through the newspapers. We refer to The Oldest Living Voter, who voted twice for General Washington, and has never failed to vote at every Presidential election since. This time he is called by the beautifully appropriate name of Mathew Phœnix; he is six and a hundred years of age—and he lives in Carverton, Luzerne Co., N. C.

AN IMPORTANT REQUISITE.—"Tidy" women always make a good impression upon their friends. Yet a tidy woman is not necessarily extravagant. She doesn't dress in rich apparel, don gorgeous jewels—a single finger ring may be the extent of splurge in any way whatever. Tidiness consists of an *ensemble* of good taste, with no predominance of any special item, and is one of those virtues or possessions which seem to come of nature, just as does its opposite, slovenliness. Young men in selecting a companion with whom they propose to travel in life should have a sharp eye on the tidy woman.

FROUDE AGAIN.—The poet of the Independent thus summarily settles the vexed question of the pronunciation of Froude's name:

"All mention of Froude
Is henceforth disallowed,
Nor shall any one now describe him as Froude,
For he swears by the rood
That his name it is Froude."

Rural Beauties and City Belles.—Country girls are not a whit behind their metropolitan sisters in the natural elements of loveliness, but it must be conceded that the city belles best understand the art of preserving and heightening their personal beauty. The most perfect features lose half their attraction unless the complexion is properly cared for, and if the pretty girls of the rural districts wish to compete with the "fair stars" of the fashionable world in refined attractions, they must pay due attention to this important point. They ought to know, for the fact is notorious, that HAGAN'S MAGNOLIA BALM imparts to the skin a delicate, pearly appearance, unproducable by any other preparation under the sun. No matter how the cuticle may have been roughened by exposure or discolored by the sun, the Balm will render it soft and pliant, and removes every blemish.

☞ Lazy hunters in Auburn, Maine, go shooting in carriages, and blaze away at the squirrels who come out to ascertain the meaning of the noise of wheels. It does not hurt the animals, and pleases the sportsmen, so it is all right.

☞ The worst coughs yield, as if by magic, to the wonderful curative powers of Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. 507.

☞ Now that the London bakers are on a strike, there will probably be more loafing than ever in the business.

"Woman as a Wife and Mother," by Henry Chavasse, M.D., the celebrated English Physician, a book which answers questions which a wife and mother is not always willing to submit to her family physician. 500 pages, with illustrations, sent post-paid on receipt of price, $2.00, by the publishers.

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Perfectly tasteless, elegantly coated, for the cure of all disorders of the stomach, liver, bowels, kidneys, bladder, nervous diseases, headache, constipation, costiveness, indigestion, dyspepsia, biliousness, bilious fever, inflammation of the bowels, piles, and all derangements of the internal viscera. Warranted to effect a positive cure.

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To all who are suffering from the errors and indiscretions of youth, nervous weakness, early decay, loss of manhood, &c., I will send a recipe that will cure you, *free of charge*. This noble remedy was discovered by a missionary in South America. Send a self-addressed envelope to the Rev. JOSEPH T. INMAN, Station D., New York City. oct12-ly

PROSPECTUS FOR 1873.
THE LADY'S FRIEND.

BEAUTIFUL NEW PREMIUM CHROMO.

The proprietors of this "Queen of the Monthlies" call the attention of the ladies to their Magazine, as being just what a Lady's Magazine should be. Edited by a Lady, nothing but what is of the most refined and elevating character ever is admitted to its pages. Its Engravings, its Fashions, its Stories all bear evidence of the same refined and cultivated taste, which has endeared it to thousands of readers.

It will continue to publish Serials, Short Stories, Poetry, &c., from its old list of talented contributors. Among the Serials we may announce:—

THE MASTER OF GREYLANDS.
By Mrs. HENRY WOOD, author of "East Lynne," "Lady Andleian's Trial," etc.

UNA AND HER PRINCE.
By MISS A. L. MUZZEY, author of "Una and Her Lions," etc.

A GIRL'S ROMANCE.
By DAISY VENTNOR, author of "Queen Coquetta," etc.

A NOVELET.
By AMANDA M. DOUGLAS, author of "An Everyday Heroine," etc.

A NOVELET.
By Miss FANNIE HODGSON, author of "Kathleen's Love Story," "Raeburn," etc. [Miss Hodgson's Novelet will run through the whole year.]

FASHIONS, FANCY WORK, ETC.

Fine Engravings of the Fashions will represent the latest styles in Dresses, Cloaks, Bonnets, Hats, Headdresses, Fancy Work, Embroidery, &c.

BEAUTIFUL ENGRAVINGS.

The Engravings of THE LADY'S FRIEND are of a very superior character, embracing pictures of subjects which touch the sentiments and affections. These choice and elegant Engravings are a special feature of this Magazine, and should entitle it to the preference over all others.

MUSIC.

A piece of the latest and most popular Music accompanies every number. The Music is of itself worth double the price of the Magazine.

SPLENDID PREMIUMS

Sewing Machines, Plated Ware, Gold Chains, &c.

Those desiring to get up Lists of subscribers to the Lady's Friend, will be well compensated. The list of Premiums is the same as for the Post.

"LITTLE SAMUEL."

A beautiful Scriptural Chromo of the Child-Prophet Samuel, starting up from his sleep at the call of the Lord, and which has all the rich and glowing colors of a fine oil painting—will be sent to the getter-up of every club, and, *under special rates*, to every subscriber. This Chromo is copyrighted, and the regular price of it is Five Dollars. It cannot be obtained for less than that price, except in connection with "The Lady's Friend," or "The Saturday Evening Post." It is twelve by fifteen inches in size.

TERMS—With the Chromo—Always in Advance.

One copy of The Lady's Friend, and one copy of the Chromo of "Little Samuel,"	$2.50
One copy of the Lady's Friend, one of "The Saturday Evening Post," and one Chromo of "Little Samuel,"	5.00
Four copies of the Lady's Friend and four Chromos (and one Chromo gratis),	8.00
Eight copies of The Lady's Friend, and eight Chromos, (and one copy each of the Magazine and Chromo gratis, for the sender of the club),	16.00
Additional subscribers may be added to the above clubs at	2.00

☞ These clubs can be made up of THE LADY'S FRIEND and "THE SATURDAY EVENING POST" conjointly, if 50 cents is added for each number of THE POST taken.

TERMS—Without the Chromo—Always in Advance.

Without the Chromo, we will send the Magazine at the old rates. One copy for $2.00. Four copies for $6.00. Eight copies (and one copy each of the Magazine and Chromo gratis, for the sender of the club) for $12.00. All additional at $1.50. Copies of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST can be taken in these Clubs at $2.00 apiece, which is now THE POST'S lowest Club price. The Chromo of "Little Samuel" will be sent to the sender of each Club, as a special reward for his or her trouble; and to each club-subscriber for one dollar extra.

One copy of THE LADY'S FRIEND ($2.00) and one of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST ($3.00) for $4.50.

OUR STEEL ENGRAVINGS.—Any one entitled a Chromo, may take in its place, if he so desires, a copy of either of our handsome Steel Engravings, "The Sisters," "One of Life's Happy Hours," "The Song of Home at Sea," or "Washington at Mount Vernon."

☞ Those desirous of getting up a Club, or a Premium List, shall have a copy of the Magazine sent to them gratis. They would also find it advisable to remit one dollar, for which we will send a copy of the Chromo of "Little Samuel" in addition. They must state expressly, however, that they wish the Chromo for this purpose, or else it will not be furnished. If the Chromo gets seriously injured in canvassing for subscribers another will be sent to replace it.

☞ The contents of THE LADY'S FRIEND and of THE POST will always be entirely different.

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit *twelve cents extra*, as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

☞ Remittances should be made, if possible, in Post-office Orders, or in Drafts or Checks, *payable to one order*.

☞ Ten cents should be forwarded *in all cases*, to pay the expense of mailing the Chromo.

Address DEACON & PETERSON,
319 *Walnut Street, Philadelphia.*

Single numbers of THE LADY'S FRIEND, 20 cents.

THE
SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, NOV. 23, 1872.

TERMS---Always in Advance.

"LITTLE SAMUEL."

A beautiful Scriptural Chromo of the Child-Prophet Samuel, starting up from his sleep at the call of the Lord, will be sent as a Premium to every single ($3.00) subscriber, who sends on ten cents to pay the expense of mailing, &c. It will also be sent to the getter-up of every Club.

RATES:

Single copy, $3.00 a year, payable in advance, not including postage, which is twenty cents a year, and payable at the office where the paper is received. Every single ($3.00) subscriber will be entitled to a copy of our Premium Chromo, "LITTLE SAMUEL," or to either of our large and beautiful Premium Steel Engravings—"The Sisters," "The Song of Home at Sea," "One of Life's Happy Hours," or "Washington at Mount Vernon." [Ten cents must always be remitted to pay the expense of mailing the Chromo or Engraving.]

One copy of THE SATURDAY EVENING POST ($3.00) and One of THE LADY'S FRIEND ($2.00) for $4.50. Or, if the Premium Chromo or an Engraving is desired in addition, $5.10.

TO THOSE WHO DESIRE TO GET UP CLUBS.

If you wish to get up a club for THE POST, send us your name, and we will forward you, *free of charge*, a number of specimen copies of the paper, so that, with them, you can give your neighborhood a good canvassing.

TERMS OF CLUBS. For $3.00 we will send four copies of THE POST for one year to one address, or each copy to a separate address. The person sending the Club shall be entitled to a copy of our Premium Chromo, or to either of our beautiful Premium Steel Engravings, "The Sisters," "One of Life's Happy Hours," "The Song of Home at Sea," or "Washington at Mount Vernon."

For $16 we will send eight copies to one address, or each copy to a separate address. The person sending this Club shall be entitled to a copy *free*, and to a copy also of the Premium Chromo, *or* to either of our Premium engravings.

The senders of Clubs can afterwards add single copies at $2.00 each.

Any club-subscriber wishing the Chromo or an Engraving must remit *one dollar extra*.

The above Clubs may be composed partly of THE POST and partly of THE LADY'S FRIEND, if desired. The subscriptions to The Lady's Friend can be taken at $1.50 apiece, instead of $2.00. Thus four copies of THE POST, and four of THE LADY'S FRIEND will be sent for $14, and in the same proportion all through.

Special offers to those who wish to make up premium lists, will be found under that head.

CLUBS OR LISTS WITH CHROMO. Those desirous of getting up clubs with the Chromo, or Premium Lists, should remit one dollar, for which we will send them a copy of the Chromo. When the Club or List is forwarded, in case the Chromo has been injured in canvassing for subscribers, another will be sent to replace it.

☞ No deviation allowed from our regular terms. If less money is sent, the paper will be sent for a proportionate period.

WE WILL SEND YOU ANY NEWSPAPER OR MAGAZINE YOU Wish, IN CONNECTION WITH THE POST, AT A REDUCED PRICE—as follows: Any Paper or Magazine the regular price of which is $1.00 at 85 cts.; regular price $2.00 at $1.75; regular price $2.50 at $2.25; regular price $3.00 at $2.62; regular price $4.00 at $3.50; regular price $5.00 at $4.50.

☞ Subscribers in British North America must remit *twenty cents extra*, as we have to prepay the U. S. postage.

☞ When additions are made to clubs, the new subscriptions must begin and end at the same time as the original club.

☞ The contents of THE POST and of THE LADY'S FRIEND will always be entirely different.

☞ Remittances should be made, if possible, in Post-office Orders, or in Drafts or Checks *payable to our order*.

☞ Ten cents should be forwarded, *in all cases*, where subscribers are entitled to and wish the Chromo or an engraving, to pay the expense of mailing.

☞ BE CAREFUL IN OPENING THE WRAPPERS OF THE CHROMO OR ENGRAVINGS. Our subscribers are enjoined to be very careful in opening the wrappers of the Chromo or Engravings when they are received lest they should injure them.

Address H. PETERSON & Co.,

No. 319 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

SINGLE COPIES 6 Cents.

SPLENDID LIST OF PREMIUMS!

[We offer the following splendid list of Premiums, because we wish to increase our subscription list—and therefore mean to pay well those who will aid us in so doing. We prefer this mode to the usual expensive system of advertising.]

Mark! Every Subscriber in a Premium List is entitled to one of the Beautiful Chromos of

"LITTLE SAMUEL;"

representing the Child-Prophet as he is aroused from slumber by the voice of the Lord, (I. Samuel; Chapter 3.) This Chromo would be sold in the stores for $5. It is twelve by fifteen inches in size. The lists may be made up conjointly, if desired, of "THE SATURDAY EVENING POST," and "THE LADY'S FRIEND." The subscribers to THE LADY'S FRIEND may be taken at $2.50 instead of $3.00.

For 50 subscribers, at $3 each,		a Silver-plated Tea Set, including Coffee Pot, worth	$50.00
For 40	" "	a Lady's solid gold, long Opera Chain—with tassels and handsomely enamelled slides with Pearl settings, worth	40.00
For 40	" "	a Lady's Fine Gold Watch, 18 karat, full jeweled, detached lever, worth	50.00
		or a Grover & Baker's Sewing Machine, worth	55.00
		or a 4-octave Melodeon, worth	60.00
For 30	" "	a Full Jewelled, Detached Lever, Coin Silver Watch, worth	30.00
For 30	" "	a Novelty Printing Press, worth	20.00
For 20	" "	a Full Jewelled, Detached Lever, Coin Silver watch, worth	20.00
For 14	" "	a Doty's Washing Machine, worth	14.00
For 12	" "	a Silver-plated Cake Basket, worth	12.00
		or a Silver-plated Ice Pitcher, worth	12.00
		or a Webster's Unabridged Dictionary, worth	12.00
For 10	" "	a Silver-plated Castor, worth	10.00
For 9	" "	a set of Parlor Billiards, worth	6.00
		or a Set of Croquet, maple, worth	10.00
		or a Set of "Le Cercle," (the new field game,) polished maple, worth	10.00
		or a Universal Clothes Wringer, worth	9.00
For 5	" "	a Three-quart Ice Cream Freezer, (Packer,) worth	4.50
For 4	" "	a Set of Six Croquet Balls, Tilton's Ebonite, worth	4.00
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For 2	" "	One copy of "Pemberton; or, One Hundred Years Ago," by H. Peterson; bound in cloth, worth	1.75

GOLD PENS AND HOLDERS.

For 5 subscribers at $3 each,		No. 6 Pen, Solid Silver Extension Case, worth	4.00
For 6	" "	Business, or No. 7 Pen, Telescopic Holder, (can be carried safely in vest pocket,) worth	4.50

The above Gold Pens are made by E. S. Johnson & Co., New York, and are of unequaled finish, elasticity and durability. They have been sold by first-class dealers for the past twenty years.

PEN AND POCKET KNIVES.

For 3 subscribers at $3 each,		One "Senator" Pocket Knife, 4 blades, Shell Handle, worth	2.50
		or Two Pruning Knives, 1 blade, Cocoa Handle, worth, each	1.25
For 5	" "	One "Senator" Pocket Knife, 5 blades, Pearl Handle, Octagon, worth	4.50

PATENT HARD RUBBER HANDLE TABLE KNIVES.

For 5 subscribers, at $3 each,		Half-a-dozen Table Knives, Solid Oval Handle, Ivory tip, worth	4.00
For 4	" "	Half-a-dozen Dessert Knives, Solid Oval Handle, Ivory tip, worth	3.75
For 5	" "	One Pair Beef and Game Carvers, Ivory tip, worth	3.75

HEAVY SILVER PLATED KNIVES.

For 12 subscribers, at $3 each,		Half-a-dozen Silver Plated Table Knives, Heavy Oval Ivory Handles, worth	10.00
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For 8	" "	One Pair Carvers, Heavy Oval Superfine Ivory Handle, worth	7.00

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For 3 subscribers, at $3 each,		One Set Tea Spoons, Extra Plate, worth	3.25
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For 8	" "	" " " " Triple " "	6.50
For 7	" "	" " Table " Extra " "	6.50
For 10	" "	" " " " Triple " "	8.25
For 8	" "	" " " Forks, Extra " "	5.50
For 10	" "	" " " " Triple " "	6.25
For 4	" "	A pair of Solid Oval Ivory Handle Butter Knives, Silver Plated, worth	3.00
For 6	" "	One Child's Set, consisting of Pearl Handle Silver Plated Knife and Fork and Spoon in a fine Morocco Case, worth	5.50

☞ The above named goods are made at the celebrated manufactory of the Meriden Cutlery Co., Meriden, Conn., and by Reed & Barton, New York City, and are warranted A No. 1 in every particular. Premiums will be forwarded as rapidly as possible in their order. A set of Spoons, Forks, &c., is always half-a-dozen pieces.

OR ANYTHING ELSE!

Any person wishing articles not on the above list, will please let us know what they prefer, and we will arrange to furnish them. *On lists of four or over, a commission of twenty per cent., (one-fifth the amount,) may be retained, if the money is preferred to the Premium.*

REMARKS.

Everything offered in our list of Premiums is guaranteed to be an excellent article. The valuation is simply the usual retail price of the article in Philadelphia and New York. By means of purchasing at the best sources, and at wholesale prices, and giving advertising in return, we are enabled to offer these splendid inducements. Our only object is to increase our circulation—giving those who help us to do this the benefit of the Premiums.

☞ The lists may be made up for THE SATURDAY EVENING POST exclusively at $3.00, or for THE LADY'S FRIEND exclusively at $2.50, or partly for one and partly the other, as is desired. Both old and new subscribers may be counted in the lists of four or over. In lists of two or three, all must be *new* subscribers. Either of our Steel Engravings may be substituted for the Chromo.

The Canvasser for a list for Premiums would do well to take with him a copy of THE POST, a copy of THE LADY'S FRIEND, and one of our beautiful Premium Chromos. They will be sent to those desirous of making up lists (and to those only) for $1.00. When the List is forwarded, in case the Chromo has been injured in canvassing for subscribers, another Chromo will be sent in its place.

The articles will be sent by express, or as ordered. Nothing will be charged for packing or boxing. The freight, however, must be paid by the receiver of the Premium.

Subscriptions (with the money) should be remitted as fast as obtained, that the subscribers may receive their papers, magazines, and Chromos at once.

EVERY NAME DESIGNED FOR A PREMIUM LIST MUST BE SO MARKED WHEN SENT IN.

☞ The contents of THE POST and of THE LADY'S FRIEND will always be entirely different.

Address H. PETERSON & CO.,

No. 319 Walnut Street, Philadelphia.

LETTERS FROM ZIG.

FAMILY JARS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

Whenever anybody disturbs me particularly, or worries me, I always take my revenge of him by writing him up in the newspapers. It is an unspeakable consolation to me to put my troubles,—and the troubles of other folks,—into the newspapers. I pour out my soul on the point of my pen. If a droning old bore comes in and vexes me, and loses my precious time, if a sewing-machine agent plagues me with his dirty tobacco smell and brassy talk, or if any of my second cousins stroke me the wrong way, and ruffle my angelic temper,—all the while the respective plagues are boring me to death, I am remarking calmly to myself: My friend; how, in the respect of a dollar and cent point of view, can I best manage to take my pay out of you for this? In point of fact, what sort of draping and padding will enable you to appear in the most ridiculous manner in a newspaper item? Upon my word of honor I do that very thing.

In that happy state of mind of making the most of other people's sins, I begin my article to-day. I sing the Family Jars of my friends. I take the covers off 'em, (the jars, not the friends,) and show 'em to the public.

If you take any animals, and tie them up tight together and fast, so they can't get away from one another, they will fight till they die, till there isn't a tooth or nail left of 'em. And that's the how and the why of family quarrels. We are all of us animals to commence on, monkeys, Mr. Darwin says, cats, dogs, porcupines, and donkeys, and so forth, I say. And "family ties" are such fearfully hard knots. You can't slip 'em, and you can't break 'em. You are all tied fast together, and there is nothing for you but to fight it out, or else civilize the animal in you up to that infinitely higher plane where people don't have any family quarrels. The thing is possible. It's not common, but it's possible.

Most families prefer to fight it out.

I'd rather be in purgatory than live with some people I know. Some folks' domestic enjoyment is an everlasting squabble. If they didn't know one another so well they'd all be very nice people, too. If they didn't have to live together, they'd all like one another very well, and never have a bit of trouble. Folks who don't live with them think they are very nice people. They are very polite and good-natured and gracious away from home, but the moment they step inside the door of home, they unchain the native dog in their breasts, and away he jumps with a howl. He snarls at this one, growls at this one because his supper ain't ready, snaps at the next one, and gives the last one a nip with his teeth. It's pleasant to be in a family where there are half a dozen wild dogs all loose at once.

The least little bit of a circumstance, which folks would never notice anywhere else, touches 'em off like powder, at home. A few cents of money more or less, or a tiny speck of dirt, sets a whole house into an uproar—and a cup of cold coffee drives 'em into a fit. It's like the rhyme in Mother Goose:

"My little old man and I fell out,
And what do you think it was all about?
I had money, and he had none,—
And that's the way the noise began."

Family squabbles are the contemptiblest thing in nature. They are about such desperately silly little things, mostly. They commence on the principle that folks can do as they please at home. Doing as one pleases always signifies being as mean as one pleases. It's curious, but it's a fact that when a person acts honestly, generously, and good-naturedly, he is not supposed to be doing as he pleases. I don't know how it comes, I'm sure. So, doing as one pleases at home mostly means being just as selfish, slovenly, quarrelsome, stingy and surly as a creature can be. I've noticed that at home many people have a habit of stripping off the mask of decency which they are compelled to wear abroad, and just naturally pouring out all the "pure cussedness" that is in 'em. They'd be kicked out of company if they acted so away from home, and they know it. Away from home they like to be well thought of—to be thought polite, decent and respectable; at home they know you have to put up with 'em anyhow, and can't help yourself, and they don't care whether you think well of them or not. It appears to me that's the origin of Family Jars. If such folks lived in my family, I'd make it hot for 'em, I tell you! I'd fairly raise the hair off their heads. People don't get on smoothly and happily at home just because they don't try to. They take liberties with one another, of fault-finding, criticising, and impertinence for which they'd be knocked on the head if they took them anywhere else. They ought to be knocked on the head at home.

It's enough to provoke a preacher, at the same time it's uncommonly amusing, to witness the little feuds of mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law. If a woman is another woman's daughter-in-law, however beautiful and excellent and amiable both these estimable ladies are, away down in the breast of each there is almost certain to be a little aly, sneaking feeling which makes them delight above all things to stick their claws into each other. Nice, loving and affectionate married sisters snub their brothers-in-law to their faces and blow them up behind their backs at a fearful rate, taking as much liberty as though each particular sister were married to all the half-dozen brothers-in-law, and had to answer for all their sins, and had a wife's divine right to blow 'em all up. It's a thousand pities that the members of a family never will learn to mind their own business with regard to one another—a thousand pities that they won't respect each individual's sacred right of privacy. It's a thousand pities that folks won't be polite, and kind, and sweet-tempered at home, where all the politeness, kindness and sweet-temper in one's nature is needed the most.

I say it's a thousand pities that folks must always show off their very meanest, ugliest side at home.

ZIG.

A Lucky Cat.

"Otta" is dead. But somebody may inquire who was "Otta?" She was a favorite cat, made famous by the will of her mistress, the late Miss Sarah C. Lewis, of Braintree, Massachusetts. This lady bequeathed the income of her house and furniture, and an allowance of two dollars a week to a friend for taking care of the cat. This novel bequest was carried out until the recent death of tabby from old age. The property now passes into other hands by the will of Miss Lewis.

While on the subject of cats we may as well mention another famous one, which also hails from Massachusetts. This creature is a musical genius, and has learned to play *Yankee Doodle* on the piano in correct time. Of course she only plays one part, the treble, but her execution of that is said to be wonderful.

☞ A poor but pious young man apologized the other evening, while making a call, for the muddiness of his boots, saying he had not taken a carriage, but had "walked up with commendable economy." He was grieved when the lovely being whom he adores inquired why he didn't "ask Mr. Economy to come in?"

☞ A Chinese lawyer in San Francisco is named "Ah Chin." If his parents had ever dreamed that he was going to become a lawyer, they would doubtless have called him "Ah Cheek."—*Norristown Herald.*

VIOLETS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY BERTHA.

Sweet bits of Heaven! Flowers you cannot be!
You are too pure, too beautiful for earth!
Like God's best blessings, scattered everywhere,
Like blessings, too, we do not prize their worth,
And often thank Him not, until the frost
Has stripped them; then we long, and long in vain,
For their sweet perfume, and their pleasant sight.
Perhaps some angel saw, with kindly smile,
Long ages past, a "little one" of Christ's,
Devoting her small talent to His praise.
The angel breathed sweet blessings as she slept,
He showered them round her in an azure cloud.
She woke, and saw all over her strange flowers
In color like God's Heaven, and a scent
The angels odorous wings had lent them, filled
With sweetest perfume all the ambient air,
And so the violets came upon the earth.
Cheer up, faint-hearted child of woe; think not
The earth is all unblessed and drear. Go forth
In early Spring, in Summer's burning heat,
In Autumn—often in the mountains high,
In close proximity to drifts of snow,
Like love still smiling in the midst of death—
See violets springing blue and gold and white,
Sweet symbols of God's blessings everywhere.

IN THE CROWD.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

In the midst of the restless, busy crowd of comers and goers, yourself as great a riddle as any one of them all, how often a chance look at a face, or the sound of a hurried word, will set us to wondering as to the end and aim of all these human lives.

There is the business man, and the idler; the artist, whose creations live on canvas, and the vagrant, with torn jacket and half-demolished hat, who might have sat to him for his renowned "Beggar At The Gate;" the woman of fashion, daintily garbed in velvets and fine laces, and the poor sewing-girl who has had to "*wait*" again for the few shillings she so much needs to drive away hunger and wretchedness; the jolly soldier of fortune, gay and careless, humming a rollicking song not heard in good society, and the poor but pious pilgrim, who in the midst of rags and poverty, is yet making a day's journey Heavenward.

There are all of these and more.

There is the cowardly skulker down the by-ways of life—the man who would not earn an honest penny if he could, but who delights in robbing his honest neighbors; the thief in high places, who *takes* what doesn't belong to him, but never calls it stealing; the gambler and the libertine, who are plotting even now to rob a man of his gold, and his home of its dearest treasure; the poor, desolate woman who has walked in the ways of sin, and found them hard ways, and the little child, fatherless and motherless, doomed from his birth to the saddest kind of orphanage!

Does not the question often rise in your mind—it does in mine—whither are all these footsteps tending? Where does the path lead which each one treads so eagerly?

Does it lead up or down? In thorny places, or in green pastures? In a desert where no water is, or by still waters flowing through gardens rich with blossoms?

Where does each path lead? To honor, or to dishonor, to happiness or misery, to a pleasant home where bright faces watch and loving hearts wait, or to a prison, where dark walls shut out the sunshine and into which the face of wife and children will never intrude; to the marriage feast or to the house of mourning; to a happy day spent with the one you love best, or to a grave whereon God's sunshine falls, and daisies and violets bloom?

Ah, whither do they all lead?

God knows.

We cannot follow our friend when he leaves us with a hand clasp and a merry good-bye. We watch him the length of the street perhaps, and then his form fades in the distance, or the intervening crowd shuts him out from our sight. We have only the memory of him left, as we have of those who are dead. But—*God knows!*

We bid our fathers and mothers good-bye—the way of the world—and go out into the world, and who knows where the paths thus divided will meet again? Or, will they ever meet?

We hold our little children in our arms, and sob and weep to think we must give them up and lie down in the embrace of Death. In what paths will *their* feet follow? Will they loiter in the paths of pleasure or find the way of the wise? Will thorns pierce their delicate feet, or will they walk peacefully through life?

God knows, but not one of us!

So short a distance our sight reaches. Such a little way our eyes can see.

Oh, is it not a good thought that there is One whose eye never slumbers nor sleeps, whose care is around us from the rising of the sun, even unto the going down thereof?

C. S.

NO CROSS NO CROWN.

BY CHARLES J. DUNPHIE.

No Cross no Crown! *He* is not slave but master
Of the dark destinies that Fate accords,
Who readeth clear through every rude disaster
These star-writ words,
Gleaming aloft in Heaven's calm empyrean,
Unclouded still, however tempests frown,
Bright as the cynosure o'er seas Judean—
No Cross no Crown!

No Cross no Crown! What need we reck, though perish
The flowers of hope that life's bleak desert deck?
Though fleet like phantoms all the joys we cherish,
What need we reck?
Through storms we travel to where peace resideth,
Through vile dishonors to sublime renown,
Through countless griefs to where no grief abideth—
No Cross no Crown!

No Cross no Crown! Oh, who would now surrender
This priceless heritage, this matchless fate,
For idle pomp and unenduring splendor
Of earthly state?
When roll the thunders, and the lightning flameth,
Hark to the Seraph's voice! Be not cast down!
The Angel standing in the sun" exclaimeth,
No Cross no Crown!

* "I saw an Angel standing in the sun." Rev. xix. 17.

SOCIAL DISSECTERS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

BY ELLA WHEELER.

Physicians and medical students are not the only people who make a profession of *dissection*. There is a class of people in every city, and in every large village, that makes a daily practice of dissecting a subject; and had I the choice, I would far sooner resign my dead body to the sharpened knives of the disciples of Æsculapius, than I would yield my living self to this latter and meaner class of Social Dissecters.

This class is usually composed of wealthy people, who rejoice in the appellation of "aristocracy." They dress well, live well and are frequently very well read. Lawyer's wives, merchant's wives and physician's wives, all constitute the S. D's. It is not an an organized society—and new members are allowed to join at any time, if they bring the proper requisites of stylish apparel, and plethoric purses and not *too much* brain. Any one who is well supplied with that article, cannot unite with the S. D's—but on the contrary will become a subject for their dissection.

Subjects are always in demand; for the tongues of the S. D's are at all times sharper and keener than all the knives in all the medical colleges in the land; and use only makes them sharper.

Consequently a subject is summarily disposed of, and if strangers do not present themselves, they are often obliged to turn upon each other.

This dissection begins something in this wise. Social Dissecter No. 1 calls on S. D. No. 2, and says,

"I have just been calling upon Senator A's wife; you know they are stopping in the city now."

"Yes, so I have heard," responds No. 2. "How do you like her?"

"Oh, she is quite pleasant; was dressed beautifully; but I guess she has always lived in the country, poor thing. She seems to think all the city people are trying to swindle her."

No. 1 departs; and No. 2 goes calling, or informs her next caller, that Mrs. Senator A., poor thing, is spending her first season in the city—and is so bewildered that she scarcely knows what to do with herself—makes herself quite ridiculous in fact, talking about city swindlers.

So the story goes, until it assumes immense proportions when the S. D's all meet together, and compare notes, each having heard a separate story; and thus Mrs. A. is dissected so completely that there is very little of her left.

The truth of the matter is, she had remarked to S. D. No. 1, during the latter's call, that she had been busy all the morning sending East for samples of drygoods, which she desired to purchase. "I had thought of purchasing here," she said, "but the prices are high, and the goods not what is wanted—and I am sure I can do better by sending East." Out of this remark, grew the "swindling" scandal.

If a new-comer arrives, who sports an elegant wardrobe, and jewelry which quite outshines the S. D's, they set her down as *vain* and *frivolous*.

No. 1 tells No. 2 what a disgusting display she (the new-comer) makes of her jewelry, and concludes that it is quite evident she is a vulgar person, whose chief aim is dress and display.

If the new-comer dresses simply, and wears no jewelry, but completely shames the magpie portion of the S. D's, with her brilliant conversational powers and well-informed mind, they set her down as "a very chatty sort of a person, but totally devoid of style, and evidently lacking in taste."

If the new-comer is both brilliant and stylish, the S. D's are driven to the wall, yet they never say "yield." They set themselves about watching her movements—and if they discover a careless remark, which can by any possibility be called ungrammatical, or an unguarded motion which can be called awkward, they seize and enlarge upon it. If they fail to do this, they investigate the lady's antecedents; and those S. D's, who sprang from the lowest stations in life, and who are indebted to some fortunate accident, or a good marriage connection for their present position in society, and *not* to their own merits, are the most eager to discover if the new-comer is well connected, if there are any humble laborers among her relations, if she was ever poor and worked for a living; and if so, to lose no opportunity of saying,

"She is very pleasant—yes, and it is quite surprising that she has learned the ways of society so readily, for she has only recently moved in our circles," or something as insinuating.

I have always observed that the most skilled Social Dissecter, is a person whom nature slighted in the distribution of brains, and one whose early life, or whose connections, would hardly bear investigation. Yet for all that, the tongues of these dissecters cut none the less keenly; and though we know that true men, and true women, never indulge in this low and mean amusement of dissection, without provocation, it is none the less trying to pass through the ordeal.

☞ A Texas man has to have forty miles of fence to go around his farm.

INDIANA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I'm an Indianian. See how my Eastern friends edge away from me, and involuntarily clap their hands to their craniums to protect their scalp-locks. Do not be afraid, my friends, I am not a heathen savage by any means, and your ambrosial locks are perfectly safe as far as I am concerned; though in these days of false hair no serious consequences would happen if one did indulge in hair-raising, provided the victim be of lymphatic temperament. But that is neither here nor there. What I set out to say was this: I'm an Indianian, desirous of information.

Why is it that Indiana is always represented as being "backwoods," and her people as being unlearned and ignorant? You can scarcely pick up a paper—an Eastern one especially—but has in it some joke, the "gist" of which seems to be the greenness of the "Hoosier."

Why, to read them, one would think that Indiana was on the extreme verge of civilization, "where bears and panthers roamed and howled" in unmolested freedom, and the painted savage, in all his hideousness, pursued the war-path. I beg leave to say that such is not the case, and to any one wishing to visit our beautiful State I will promise they can do so with perfect safety to their scalp-lock.

The Shawnee, Pottawottamie and Iroquois roam no more over our broad prairies and through our stately forests. The war-whoop is never heard, and the smoke of their council fires is seen no more upon our hills. They left some time ago, taking with them squaw and pappoose, wampum and wigwam; by the way, they left us the beautiful Indian Summer, for which we are duly thankful; and I have heard since that most of them have taken their departure to the happy hunting-grounds of the "Great Spirit."

Mr. "Lo" himself came back once a few years ago. Be it known that in the Wabash river, not far from the "wigwam" of your correspondent, is a place designated as the "Old Indian Rifle." Well, one day, to the astonishment of the natives, Mr. Lo appeared on the farther bank. He came not heralded by war-whoop or accompanied by "braves," but simply afoot and alone; calling not for skiff or canoe, he made his way direct to the "Indian Rifle," and waded across; a feat that no one had ever attempted before, unless it had been our predecessors, the Indians. Whence he came, whither he went, no man knoweth to this day; for when he reached the opposite bank he disappeared among the bushes, and was never heard of afterward. Did he come after buried treasure, or only to visit the former hunting-ground of his fathers. Echo answers, "I don't know."

Now as to ignorance, "Which I wish to remark, and my language is plain," that the Hoosier has just as much intelligence as his Eastern brother; and if he has not quite the same amount of education, he makes it up in good common sense, energy and go-aheaditiveness.

But Indiana is not destitute of educational facilities. Witness her public schools and institutions of learning, to say nothing of the beautiful cities and towns scattered all over the State. That does not look as though she were in a state of semi-civilization does it? If it does, allow me to say that it is not perceptible to the eye in a state of nudity.

Indiana is not so old as some of her sister States, but she is large of her age and growing rapidly, and bids fair to be a star of the first magnitude in the constellation of our glorious Union. BELLE BREMER.

"MARRIED."

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY GLEN CAROL.

What is it that startles you? Is there aught more common than a marriage announcement in a daily paper? To *you* there should be "nothing in a name." Surely you have piled years and memories so high together that no golden dream of a vanished past can ever haunt your vision! The thicker the dust lies upon some pages of your life-book the better. Tear off the glittering mask you have worn so proudly and so long—you cannot hide yourself from your own heart! Is it well to remember, when others forget? Or to weep, when other eyes are dry? Your lips have forgotten the royal smile they wore an hour ago. Your cheeks are scarlet, but not with joy's roses are they aflame. This long and safely-fettered passion—slave of your regal will—has burst its bonds at last. Tremble before its stormy power, now! Crouch low, on bended knee, meek subject of a despot's sway? Breathe tenderly the name that in your youthful pride and insolence you scorned to wear!

Call upon it, madly, entreatingly—there will come back never an answer! The twilight creeps into the room, shadowing the face *he* loved—but there is a shadow upon it darker than that of the twilight. Fall softly, night, shrouding this page also, of one life's pitiful history.

To-morrow again the mask, to be dropped no more in this world—worn proudly even till death sets his marble seal upon the secret kept so long and faithfully!

Wall Street Grief.

"Eli Perkins" tells the following touching tale of Wall street:—

Coming up from New York yesterday, I met a poor, disconsolate Wall street broker. His heart seemed broken, and his face was a picture of despair. I had been usher at his wedding a few months before, when he seemed the picture of happiness; so, smiling, I said:

"Why, Charley! what has happened?—what makes you so sad?"

"Oh! Eli," he sighed, "I am all broken up. I have met with a dreadful misfortune."

"What is it, Charley?" I urged, sympathetically.

"Oh! Eli, Nellie, my dear wife, is dead!" and then he broke down. Pretty soon he continued: "Yes, I'm all broken up. I don't take any interest in anything now. My mind is constantly with my poor, angel wife. I dream of her all the time, in the morning and at night, and—by the way, Eli, *how did you say Erie closed to-night?*"

"Erie is down, and they are 'all off,' Charley."

"Well, that's cheering," he sobbed, "for when I got 'short' on Nellie, I went 'short' of the whole market, and it's really very consoling in my great grief to find things looking so cheerful on the street."

OLD PROBABILITIES.—It is difficult to make the pensive public believe that the person so popularly known under the above name is a young man—well, somewhere about thirty—and is quite good-looking, having a handsome figure, a fine face, with a Roman nose and clear blue eyes; walks with a military bearing, and takes his glass of wine and joke at dinner as if his nights were not given to thunder and lightning, wind and rain, like unto the dreadful witches in "Macbeth." His real name is Myer—General, and of the United States army. He is well endowed in a charming wife and worldly goods, and has a house that is one of the most attractive in Washington.

☞ Bronze studs and sleeve-buttons, of antique designs, are now fashionable for gentlemen.

HELOISE.

BY FRED. E. WEATHERLY.

The hill still reddens where we stand,
The far sea still gleams blue and clear,
In happy light still lies the land,
As in the days of yesteryear;
But love is made an empty name,
Those days were not so strange as these,
Things are the same yet not the same,
Between us, Heloise.

And still the heather's rod and gold
Shall whisper rippling at thy feet,
Shall mind thee of the days of old,
The days when we were wont to meet;
But we shall never meet again,
By field, or woodland ways, or seas,
For times are altered, love is slain,
Between us, Heloise.

Farewell, a long farewell to thee,
Where we have loved will others love,
And view the same sweet land and sea,
And move where once we loved to move;
And some will love, and some forget,
And part in such fair scenes as these,
Without one tear or one regret,
As we do, Heloise.

PERSONAL.

Froude is slightly flippant. At least, so a young lady says.

Professor Tyndall is still lecturing to crowded houses in Philadelphia.

Rubinstein is a rather eccentric fellow in common life.

Wieniawski, the violinist, who came over with Rubinstein, says: "The women of this country are very pretty, and seem to be very appreciative of music."

Jenny Lind has been singing in the choir of the American Episcopal Church in Florence.

At a private dinner party the other evening thirteen sat down at table. A superstitious matron, who was among the guests, discovered the fact, and rising hastily left the room. A gallant gentleman present withdrew from the party, and madame was persuaded to resume her seat.

The difference between Mother Eve and Father Hyacinthe's wife is, that while the former was tempted with an apple, Mrs. H. was led away by a pere.

Anton Rubinstein, the great pianist, was at one time so poor in Vienna that he had to give music lessons at half a florin each.

Alphonse Karr loves to have about him things that are cheerful. So it comes that in his library is preserved the skull of an old sweetheart, and the skull of a servant-girl who was always robbing him.

Philadelphia is to have a wedding in December at St. Stephen's Church, which will be as unique as it will be large and fashionable. We are informed that there will be twelve bridesmaids, all of whom will be attired in costumes to be made expressly for the occasion by the celebrated Paris man dressmaker, Worth. The bride will wear a dress of lace, now being made in Belgium, at a cost of $9000, gold.

It is not generally known that M. Rouzaud first met Miss Nilsson in Paris when she used to be taking music lessons from M. Collinet, whose daughter Marie was at that time teaching her singing. M. Rouzaud, as a lover of music, used to take pleasure in being one of M. Collinet's social circle. Both M. Rouzaud and Miss Nilsson were then comparative nobodies. It was when they were thus obscure that they made up their minds to marry each other. Mlle. Nilsson and her husband have taken a splendid mansion in the Champs Elysees—the same where Patti passed her honeymoon. Her father-in-law, M. Rouzaud, who is a colonial merchant, has, in honor of his son's marriage, given a sumptuous dinner to his clerks, and placed in each of their napkins a bank-note for 1,000 francs.

The following fresh photograph of Count Von Moltke is from the Paris Constitutionnel: "He is a man of fair height, thin, and who, in spite of his seventy-three years, holds himself erect. His appearance is imposing. On seeing him one recognizes a man accustomed to command, and whose orders admit of no reply. He alighted at Colmar at the Hotel des Deux Cerfs, and he had hardly arrived when he went out walking quite alone in the town, showing a preference for the most tortuous streets, and always finding his way easily without asking for information. He works nearly constantly alone in his apartments. As late as eleven at night one may see one of the windows of his apartment lighted up. Before a table sits an old man wearing a little black cap, tracing lines upon maps with pencils, which he often changes, no doubt on account of their color. Field-Marshal Von Moltke works thus every evening. He rises at six A. M. and labors till one o'clock, when he dines in one of the public rooms of the hotel. After dinner, which is rapidly dispatched, the marshal goes out walking; he returns at four, works till seven, and then goes out unattended till half-past eight. He is often to be seen walking along the river-side in a most deserted spot, with his hands behind his back, in the attitude of a man who is meditating."

Is an Indian Marriage Legal?

It has been a common practice among the settlers in frontier States to contract what are called Indian marriages. That is, Indian traders and others would select wives among the Indians, whom they would wed according to the Indian custom, or otherwise, as the case might be, not always restricting themselves to a single wife. The question has now been brought before the Missouri courts whether the issue of such marriages can inherit property as legitimate heirs. This is a question of great interest in the West, as in Missouri, Arkansas, Texas, Iowa and nearly all the Territories, there are great numbers of persons who are the offsprings of such irregular marriages. The case which has opened this novel question of legitimacy is one of peculiar interest. Mr. William Gillis, one of the first settlers of Kansas City, and its most wealthy citizen at the time of his death, some time ago died a bachelor, as every one supposed, leaving his property to his niece, a Mrs. Troost, who afterward also died, leaving a will in which were bequests for the erection of an opera house, a church and a seminary, and for the establishment of a park and other public improvements in Kansas City. Mr. Gillis, it appears, in early life had been an Indian trader and had contracted an Indian marriage. His half-breed children have contested the will of Mrs. Troost, on the ground that they were the legal heirs of Gillis, and the case has been tried before a jury in the Circuit Court, who decided in favor of the Indian heirs, thus setting aside the will. Of course an appeal was taken from this decision, and the case will be carried before the Supreme Court, when the question will be definitely settled whether a marriage contracted according to Indian customs constitutes such a marriage as the laws of the country can take cognizance of and enforce as legal and binding in all respects.

☞ It is said that the present Freshman class at Harvard College has held a meeting, and resolved almost, unanimously in favor of abolishing hazing, but let not the hopeful philanthropist have too much confidence in this resolution. Every freshman class, in the first half of the first term, has a righteous horror for the barbarous practice, and naturally enough, for they are the victims; but the sentiments which they will hold on the subject a year hence are more important and some marvellous changes of opinion occur in a twelve month. If the leaders in this abolition movement are not foremost among hazers next year, then the nature of your college students is becoming regenerate. —*N. Y. Mail.*

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ON A ROSE:

GATHERED AND GIVEN BY MOONLIGHT.

Fragrant, full-flushed, my Flora's gift,
A rose—dear love's own token;
How many whispers shy and swift,
What words half-sighed, half-spoken,
Have severed blossoms such as this,
In hands that pressed and parted,
O'erheard since sounded love's first kiss,
Since love's sweet tear first started.

And if the year were always June,
And every June were sunny;
If never discord jarred the tune,
Or bitter spoiled the honey;
If days had ever golden morns,
And ever silver closes,
And Love's own blossom knew not thorns,
We'd crown old Time with roses.

But now, oh flower of fleeting date,
Yet most unearthly sweetness,
Thou art a hint of hidden state,
And unattained completeness.
Swift glory of the season's prime,
Brief crown of life's brief passion,
Thou yet dost smile at tyrant Time,
And mock at despot Fashion.

Thy petals spread by Eden's stream,
In Arcady and Arden;
And now, beneath the moonlight's gleam,
They grace my lady's garden.
Frail yet perennial, flower of flowers,
Sweet rose, what other blossom
Should trail o'er Aphrodite's bowers,
Or deck my darling's bosom?

And yet, ah! and that buds should fall,
And sad that blooms should perish,
Faint odors, withered leaves, be all
That Autumn has to cherish.
The eternal seas of time and tide
Nor change nor chance can banish;
Our lives are like the waves that glide,
And swell, and break, and vanish.

Ten thousand blossoms such as this
Have witnessed lovers' meeting;
Seen many a Genevieve's shy kiss,
Heard many a Romeo's greeting.
Where are they now? The pluck of clay
Pharaoh's huge folly covers,
Is not more wholly dead than they,
The blossoms and the lovers.

My rose to-night is fresh and fair;
But where's its sister blossom,
That nestled once in Pyrrha's hair,
Or blushed in Celia's bosom?
Of all the myriad buds ablaom
On all the plains of Sharon,
What one may brighten Styx's gloom,
Or deck the bark of Charon?

Me, Fancy! what a dolorous plight
Anent my lady's guerdon,
A song with love for life and light,
Should have a brighter burden.
If Pyrrha's roses bloomed and died,
Our roses yet are blooming;
So sweet we'll snatch the season's prime,
Ere Autumn comes a-glooming.

For Love shall live, though lovers pass;
Flora survives her flowers;
Each year brings greenness to the grass,
And blossoms to the bowers.
We'll trust while skies are blue above,
Till Time's last cycle closes,
That every life shall have its love,
And every June its roses.

JOHN PASSMORE'S PLOT;

OR,

HELD IN THE HIDDEN ROOM.

A STORY OF PHILADELPHIA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY FRANK CARROLL.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE BURGLARY.

It was a sultry evening in the latter part of June, and the clerks and porters in the store of Willing & Son were glad when the closing hour arrived, giving them an opportunity to get away to their homes.

Mr. Passmore was usually the last to leave the store, letting himself out by a side door, leading into an alley back, so that the porter might take the keys of the main doors.

On this day, however, he was absent, having left early that morning for Cape May, as he informed his clerks, with the intention of being absent one or two days.

The store was firmly closed, the strong doors being carefully locked, and shortly after six o'clock the huge building, that had resounded all day with the bustle and roar of commerce, relapsed into a death-like silence.

It was a scene to send a nervous thrill through the frame of any one not well accustomed to the place, the long line of shelves, merging more and more into gloom as the eye ran down the extended room, till it ended in a shadowy darkness, which the imagination might well have peopled with spectral figures.

The hours passed on without a break in the silence, darkness gradually spreading its sable wings over the shadowy outlines of the store.

The hour of nine was tolled with a loud clang by the neighboring State House clock, and in a few minutes after the door on the side alley was carefully opened, and a man entered the long deserted scene.

He walked through the boxes, and other incumbrances upon the floor, with the step of one thoroughly accustomed to its intricacies, approaching the back of the store with little impediment from the thick darkness reigning.

Arrived there he drew a match from his pocket and struck it on the floor. The burning wood flashed up with a strong glare in his face, as he stooped over it, revealing the features of John Passmore.

His trip to Cape May had been but a blind to divert from himself any possible suspicion. He now lit a small bit of wax taper which he had brought with him, and proceeded to examine the fastenings of the back of the store.

"The window leading to the cellar will be the most probable entrance," he muttered. "Once in they can easily force this door, and the worse marks they make the better. I need not meddle here, their tools can easily force it from the inside. I will go down and open the fastenings of the lower window."

He made his way carefully to the head of the stairs leading below, and passed down into the underground apartment, a room stored with great boxes of goods, not yet opened for display in the upper store. Two windows in the back wall served to light the rear of this apartment. They were closed with strong, iron-bound shutters, firmly bolted. These reached but little above the surface of the ground, but opened into a small area specially walled off to allow the light to enter.

With hands that trembled with nervousness, Passmore carefully drew back the bolts of one of these windows, leaving the end of the bolt still engaged partly in its first iron catch.

"There, a slight wrench will open that, and it will only appear as if the bolt had not been shoved home by the porter. Now to get out of this, for I am growing confoundedly nervous." In a few minutes afterward the store had regained its former condition of utter silence and loneliness, the false-hearted villain who had arranged this scheme of robbery, flying hastily from the scene of his criminal preparations.

The night passed slowly on without a sound. The clock struck ten. Immediately after the sound of this hour had died away upon the still air of the night, a noise of a different character might have been heard in the deserted alley referred to. It was the sound of carefully treading feet, and of low voices, followed by a peculiar noise as of the rending of wood, and a short, sharp crack, as the cellar window that had been prepared for the burglars flew open.

Three men entered the store by this aperture, closing it carefully behind them.

"Show a glim, Joe," said one of these, in a suppressed voice. "It's dark as thunder here. I've barked my shins a'ready."

"Hold on, then," said the person addressed, as he struck a match and lit a dark lantern, throwing its keen line of light carefully around.

In this movement the faces of the three burglars were plainly lit up, showing the features of Joe Corbin in the man who held the lantern; while a second of them was the person whom the detective, Wood, had addressed as Jack Bouncer. The third was a stranger to us.

Threading their way by the light of the lantern they ascended into the main store, and hastened to the back door.

"Now, Bill, the tools," said Bouncer. "It's a strong lock, but the catch is put on with screws. Let us have that screw driver, and I'll soon settle for this."

He went to work with the rapidity and skill of a professional locksmith, and in a few moments the catch was lying upon the floor, and the door, whose lock had been rendered useless, was ready to open at a touch.

"Did you tell him to back the carriage into the alley?" asked the one called Bill. "It won't be safe to carry these things across the street, with the chance of a policeman twigging us."

"A durned slim chance," said Jack, laughing. "But the kerridge is all right. Where's the stuff, Joe? Delays' is dangerous."

Joe carefully consulted a diagram of the store, which he held in his hand.

"This looks like the spot," he said, leading toward the middle of the store. "Try them boxes. The covers are loose."

"All silks, and fine as blazes," muttered Jack. "We're on our lay, boys; no use to look furder."

"Hold here a minute till I go back and see if all's clear."

Suiting the action to the word, Joe carefully opened the back door and went out into the quiet street, up which no human being ever thought of going after night.

A cab occupied the middle of this narrow alley, which was just wide enough to allow room for its wheels between the curbs.

A lamp burned at the street entrance, but the alley was deep, and the dark horses and carriage were not readily noticeable from the outer street.

"Keep alive," said Joe warningly to the man upon the box. "We've found the swag, and are ready to load. I'll jest walk down to the street and see how the land lays."

As he approached the corner, past which persons were occasionally moving, though without thought of glancing down the alley so feebly illuminated by the light of the lamp, a small figure started up and approached him.

"All serene, Uncle Joe," said the voice of Patsy. "Not a star in sight. The perlice are all on their beat, I s'pose, but it's a dead beat." He laughed, in amusement at his own wit.

"Keep a sharp eye open, Patsy. You're on duty mind. Never go back on duty."

"Not if this fellar knows hisself."

"And don't forget the signal if there's anything in the wind."

"You git back. I'll tend to my department," said Patsy, rolling out the last word as if it had added a cubit to his stature.

Corbin re-entered the store to find his associates already busily removing the goods from the open boxes, and taking down such as had been already shelved, heaping them in a pile near the back door.

"All's clear, lads," he said, in a low tone. "Now's our time."

The three men at once began hastily to remove the goods, and stow them away as closely as possible in the carriage.

For five minutes this continued uninterrupted, during which time their strong shoulders and active hands had considerably lowered the heap of silks that had been laid upon the floor.

"Smooth sailing this, Jack," laughed Corbin, as he busily forced the rich goods into the carriage, pressing them down with all his strength. "'Taint much like our last job, where we had to run for our lives, without a cent's worth to show for it."

"We aren't out of this by a jug full," growled the other. "Never holler till yer out of the woods. It's jest a bit too smooth, 'cording to my notion."

"What's to hinder its being, I'd like to know?"

"Maybe you'll know more than you want afore you're through. Keep shady. Luck ain't a going to be all on one side."

While thus busily at work and conversing in subdued tones, events were happening elsewhere that justified Jack's misgivings.

The front door of the store was carefully opened, and, one by one, four men filed cautiously in, stooping as they did so, and concealing themselves behind the numerous boxes of goods with which that part of the floor was covered.

The door was as carefully closed without a sound, and for some moments all was buried in utter silence.

But had the three burglars been less closely occupied they might have observed dark shadows slowly approaching them down the long floor, now half rising and flitting from one to another hiding place, now crouched on the floor and cautiously gliding onward.

Nearer and nearer they drew, scarcely for a moment of their progress revealed to the senses of the burglers, even if these senses had been less earnestly engaged. They were now concealed by the salesmen's counter, now by the office of the clerks, now slipped past the head of the stairs leading to the lower story, now reached the private office in which we first made the acquaintance of John Passmore. Into this they glided, one by one, and disappeared from the sight of any one in the lower end of the store.

This movement, slow as it seemed, really occupied but a few minutes ere the flitting shadows, directed in their movements by the faint light from the lantern of the burglars, had thus reached and disappeared in the private office.

During this time, utterly unsuspicious of the proximity of such dangerous indications, Joe Corbin and his associates worked diligently on, cautiously conversing as they did so.

"What makes you always look on the dark side, Jack?" asked the third, who had not before spoken. "For my part I've always been lucky in anything I've tuk in hand, and ain't a going to give up easy."

"You tuk in hand!" said Jack, contemptuously. "Have you ever tuk anything in hand bigger 'n robbing a hen-roost, or goin' through an old woman's stockin'? Yer a young chicken yet. Wait till you've had a bit of experience afore you begin to talk where old hands is."

"Don't you call this experience?"

"This!" ejaculated Jack, in rather too loud a tone for safety. "This is baby's play 'long side of places I've been in. Don't want to find fault with you, yer a young chit and don't know better; only a Spring chicken oughtn't to crow like a rooster."

With a grim smile the veteran burglar resumed his work, from which he had paused a moment to deliver this oracular opinion.

"Ain't you both blowin' a bit too much? It's our hands that want to be busy now, not our tongues."

The carriage was now more than half filled with the costly fabrics which had been so rapidly and closely pressed into it.

They were all in the store, filling their arms again from the diminished heap that occupied the floor. At this instant there came with startling distinctness from the alley outside, a shrill and peculiar whistle, so close a representation of the call of the partridge, that in the country it might easily be mistaken for the bird itself.

But in the city no such mistake was possible. It was Patsy, who had signalled with his favorite whistle, the well-known sound of "Bob White."

All leaped to their feet with quick alarm on hearing this loud warning, dropping most of the goods which they had in their arms. It was repeated, more shrilly than before.

At the same instant the sound of the carriage was heard, rapidly driving down the paved alley. The driver had been fully instructed how to act in an emergency, and had instantly given the whip to his horses on hearing this, the preconcerted signal. Nor was he a moment too soon. As he reached the extremity of the alley, and turned, without slackening his pace, into the outer street, a man who stood there leaped to catch the reins, and bring the horses to a stand-still.

The driver, however, with a keen cut from his long lash, forced him to loose his hold with an exclamation of pain. The next blow of the lash fell upon the horses, which sprang forward rapidly and drew the heavily-laden carriage at a fierce pace down the street.

The person who had tried to stop it ran after, at full speed, loudly crying, "Stop thief!" and various other exclamations, and being joined by new pursuers at every yard, till a long line followed the flying carriage.

But at the furious speed at which it was driven pursuit on foot was useless, and it soon left the laboring line out of sight in the distance, one by one falling back again to its original elements.

Meanwhile a rapid rush of feet down the alley had been heard, and as the alarmed burglars ran to the back door, it was suddenly closed from without with a violent slam, and held so firmly that their efforts to open it were of no avail.

"Sold, by thunder," cried Jack, as he grasped a large, well-filled box of goods that stood near by, and, with the help of his companions, soon had it drawn closely against the door.

"There that'll keep them back for a minute. The front door's our chance now."

They started rapidly for the other end of the store, but were stopped by a most unexpected and startling vision.

Drawn in a line across the floor, near the door of the private office, stood four men, pistol in hand, the muzzles frowning darkly upon the hemmed-in burglars.

The latter recoiled in uncontrollable alarm, as this dangerous apparition burst upon their appalled vision.

"Douse the glim," cried Jack, excitedly.

Corbin instantly closed the slide of his lantern—leaving the scene in utter darkness.

It was but an instant, however, as a light was at once displayed by the opposite party.

This momentary darkness, quickly as it had been dispelled, sufficed to decidedly change the aspect of affairs. To men who bear their lives in their hands no opportunity passes unimproved.

At the instant of closing the lantern Joe had discerned a clear way by the shelves on the east side, only closed by the slim figure of the policeman who occupied this position.

Almost simultaneously with the loss of the light, the person in question was encountered by a heavy body and hurled headlong to the floor, his weapon rolling from his hand, but without discharging.

At the reappearance of light Corbin had disappeared; the third man of the burglars had hardly changed his position, while the one called Jack stood immediately in front of the tallest figure in the party. His intention was apparently to pass them as Corbin had done, but the light had been shown too quickly for his agility.

For a single instant the two men faced each other, glaring into each other's eyes with the fury of wild beasts about to engage in deadly fray.

"Jack Bouncer!" cried the policeman, in excited tones, "this is your new business, hey? It won't pay, Jack."

"Yer a smart man, Wood, but you've waked the devil now," cried the burglar.

He leaped at his antagonist, heedless of his presented pistol, heedless of the bullet that whistled over his shoulder. In an instant the acute villain had wrapped round the form of the officer several yards of the long piece of silk that had lain upon his arm, and which he had covertly opened since the alarm was first given.

Wood, with a fierce oath, strove to disengage his arms from the entangled stuff in which they were wrapped. But he was so closely bound that a precious minute elapsed ere he could free himself from his silken bonds.

The burglar instantly rushed past his hampered antagonist. But the companion of the latter, with equal agility, sprang upon the flying villain, the impetus of his leap bringing the two of them to the floor, locked in each other's arms.

The wrestle was fierce but momentary. The trained sinews and vigorous muscles of Bouncer easily overcame the weaker physical strength of the young man who had engaged with him, and who now fell backward from a sharply administered blow, while the freed burglar leaped to his feet.

"Joe!" he ejaculated, with a quick glance around.

"Here," a loud voice replied, and the figure of Joe Corbin appeared for an instant erect at the head of the stairs leading below. "This way, Jack," he cried, disappearing from sight with a quick spring downward.

At the same instant the back door flew open with a crash, as the box gave way before the combined efforts of the men outside. They came rushing in a body into the store.

Bouncer would have followed Corbin, but he was too late. Wood, at last free, now with an agile spring caught him in his strong arms, and despite his desperate efforts to escape, he was handcuffed by another of the party.

If oaths would have broken his bonds, the fierce flood he poured forth must have been efficacious. But, bound hand and foot, he was left to swear to his heart's content, while they sought to capture his two associates.

The third burglar was caught trying to escape by the open back door, and was speedily in company with his leader.

But Corbin had utterly disappeared. The lower floor was searched in vain, no trace of him was present.

The open window back at length unfolded the mystery. The officers had left the coast clear by running into the store from the alley, and the astute villain had taken advantage of this oversight to make his escape.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

☞ A Parisian "finger nail artist" has opened an office in New York.

NAUGHTY NELL.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY ANNE L. FORCELLE.

"Eleanor."

"What?"

"Eleanor?"

"What, sir?" with a defiant stress on the "sir."

"I wish to speak to you." Father's voice was very even, but there was a little flush on his face as he looked at the straight, little figure by the window. "Give me your attention for a moment if you please."

I half rose as she turned around, and commenced gathering up my sewing, but father motioned me to keep my seat. "It is fitting that you should hear what I have to say, Alberta; remain here, please." Eleanor came slowly forward, and stood before father, lightly clasping the back of a chair with one hand, and holding the torn gathers of her skirt in place with the other.

"What is it?" she asked, flashing a quick glance at me, under her drooping lids, but otherwise maintaining her unmoved demeanor. How beautiful she looked with her head thrown proudly back, the angry color flaming in her cheeks, her lips pressed tightly together, her white lids with their long, black lashes drooping scornfully over her great, dark eyes; beautiful, naughty Nell.

It was only a little matter in which she had offended father this time, but it had been one little offence on another during all Nell's eighteen years. All her life I had been engaged in a perpetual endeavor to keep peace between her and father.

She was my only sister, and six years my junior, mother had died when she was very young, and I had always, even when a child, felt that I was responsible for her to a great degree. I was plain and quiet, like my mother, and had always been my father's favorite, but Nell was wild and ungovernable always. She set her stepmother at nought when she was little more than a wee baby, and was not afraid of anything or anybody. Me, she loved dearly; and always, when she felt herself ill-used or neglected by any of the others, she would come to me, and, with her arms clasped around my neck, and her wet face pressed close to mine, sob herself to sleep.

As she grew to womanhood the yellow locks and great black eyes which had given her so weird and elf-like a look when a child, made her beauty remarkable, and I was very proud of her, but many an unhappy hour did I experience on her account, for there was scarcely a day passed without a collision, slight perhaps, but none the less painful to me, between her and father. They never understood each other at all; to Nell, father's cold, stern, unapproachable manner was simply unbearable, she chafed at any restraint, however slight, and resented any apppearance of authority on the part of any one, while father looked on her odd, bright ways with strong disfavor.

Since my marriage, Nell and I had been, in a measure, separated, for I had passed a great part of my time in London, only going down to Nuthall once in a great while, when Nell happened to be away at school; but now that I had, on account of my health, given up London for the season, and come down with Charles and baby Maude to spend the Winter, I had found her apparently unchanged, save that her beauty had grown more remarkable.

She fell in love with baby Maude at once, and Hannah, the nurse, found her office a sinecure indeed, while I was glad to see how Nell's wilful wayward nature clung to the little, fair-faced child. I saw with pain that she and father understood one another no better than of old, but I saw that he was more forbearing and patient with her than he used to be, for he was in his heart very proud of her beauty, and was, already, planning a bright future for her.

"I am glad you think of taking her to London next season, she must not settle down into a country squire's wife. Aha," father actually chuckled at the thought, "wouldn't she lead him a life though?" and the image of Nell and the unfortunate squire *was* ludicrous in the extreme.

The Marables drove over during the morning. Miss Marable, Miss Rose Marable and Mr. Frank Marable, and they remained over lunch. I watched Nell furtively as she talked with them, and was vastly amused at the airs which she put on with Mr. Marable—a flaxen-haired young gentleman just home from college, whose admiring glances and complimentary speeches showed what an impression her beauty had made on him.

The young ladies were greatly interested in the county ball which was to come off quite soon, and during luncheon the subject was discussed at some length.

"We all have tickets," said Miss Rose. "Everybody will be there. Are you going, Mrs. Newcastle?"

"I hardly think so," I answered. "Charles does not care to, and I do not consider myself in society this Winter."

"It will be really splendid for this place," said Miss Marable, "nothing to what you have in London, of course, but—you will go Miss Sylvester?"

Nell shook her head. "I think not," she said, indifferently. "Perhaps I may, but I don't care much about it any way."

Mr. Marable's countenance clouded a little, and I saw him whisper a word or two of deprecation as he turned toward her, but his only answer was a flash of her great eyes and a very unlady-like, but still very charming, shrug of her pretty shoulders.

That evening when we were in the drawing-room after dinner—father, mother, brother Tom and Charles and I—Eleanor did not join us as usual; but I, thinking that she was up-stairs with baby Maude, did not give her absence a thought until father, laying aside his paper, demanded to know where she was.

"With Maude, I think," I answered, but Tom disputed that at once.

"I saw her go out, not twenty minutes ago," he said. "She had a shawl around her, and went toward the south gate."

I saw the dark cloud rise on father's face, and could have pinched Tom for his ill-timed information.

"It's just like one of her freaks," said father, after an ominous pause. "Go and find her, Tom, and tell her to come in at once."

I don't know why it was, but a sudden impulse seized me to go and call her myself, and, rising, I laughingly bade Tom and Charles remain in-doors. "A run in the fresh air will do me good," I said, and wrapping the thick cloak which my careful husband brought me, warmly around me, I went out alone.

"Toward the south gate," Tom had said, and I ran down through the light snow, looking anxiously for Nell's slender figure.

"Nell," I called, "Nell," but the wind drowned my voice, and, as I went on, I began to wish nervously that I had let Tom come after all.

There was a group of holly trees just between me and the gate, and as I neared them I hesitated a moment, for I was never a brave woman, and looked at them through the dusk as the wind rattled their branches together with a half-determination to retrace my steps even then, but shame urged me on. I ran lightly by them, and turning around the corner, saw in the dim, uncertain light, two figures standing, one inside and one outside the gate. One was that of a man—the other was unmistakably that of my sister Nell! I stood for one moment gazing at them; in the baffling light I could distinguish nothing clearly, but I saw that he was holding both her hands and talking very earnestly. I saw her head fall on his shoulder as he leaned over the low gate. I saw him bend over her lovingly, and then I turned away and ran back unseen.

I was heartily sorry that I had discovered this, and yet more thankful than I could tell that it was I, and not Tom, who had intruded upon them. I determined not to speak of it to any one, not even to Nell, unless she chose to take me into her confidence, for I felt a little conscience-stricken at having, even innocently, spied upon her; and so I turned half-way up the walk and went slowly back again.

I heard her as she came swiftly along, her dress trailing its silken folds over the snow, and called to her, "Nell, naughty Nell, why are you out here so late?"

"I was nervous and fidgety," she answered, laughing in her light way, and drawing my arm through hers. "What a dear, small sister it was to come after me! Is the paternal head going to scold, Bertie?" with an affectation of terror which was irresistible.

"I am afraid so, Nell."

It was useless to reprove her sauciness. I had given that up long ago, and so she kept on laughing and talking about the "lecture" in store for her, until I almost found it impossible to believe that there was a great secret hidden in her heart, so thoroughly care-free and child-like did she seem.

It was only when we came into the hall that she grew graver, and then she turned to me with a little shadow on her face and a great eagerness in her eyes.

"Bertie," she said, laying her soft cheek on mine coaxingly, "I do so want to go to that ball—won't you go and take me with you?"

I had thought myself accustomed to Nell's freaks, but this last whim fairly astonished me. She, who had treated the subject so cavalierly that morning, pleading to go now. I looked down at her in amazement.

"Please do—ple-e-e-ease!" she persisted, "or I won't be 'good' for a month. *Do* be a dear, old, blessed Bertie!"

"Well, *yes*, then," I answered, for I never could resist her, and she knew it; and although my heart sank at the prospect, I was almost reconciled to it by the girlish embrace and warm kiss which she gave me, and by the almost blissful delight on her beautiful face as she went in to hear mother's querulous complaints and father's severe rebuke.

That was on the tenth of the month, and on the twentieth the ball was to be; but during the interval, although I had faintly hoped that she would, Nell never mentioned the occurrence of that evening. I almost began to doubt the evidence of my own senses, in fact, for her expression of perfect innocence whenever she met my eyes almost made me think, although I *knew* better, that there had been some mistake about it, but the fact remained unaltered. The next thing was, who was her companion?

In the baffling light I had only been able to see that he was tall, unusually so, for although Nell was much taller than I, he had stood far above her. It was not Frank Marable—that was certain, for he was scarcely an inch taller than Nell—in fact, it was quite easy to say who it was *not*, but to say who it *was*, was a different matter, and so I worried and wondered, but held my peace—even to my husband—for Nell's sake, although her want of confidence in me hurt me cruelly.

During those ten days Nell seemed almost metamorphosed. She who had never before shown the least interest in regard to her appearance or dress, who had never looked in a mirror save when it was unavoidable, who had apparently only considered dress a necessary evil, and long skirts a tedious incumbrance, and who had never given "the fashions" a thought, suddenly became deeply interested in combinations of silks and laces, and strict as any London belle in her care of her complexion.

Such a life as she led poor Martin, mother's maid! Such oceans of puffings and flounces as they together concocted, and such consultations as they had (to which Lucile, my maid, was often summoned), over the fashion plates and patterns which had been ordered from London, I never saw before.

Mother fretted and scolded at the neglect which she suffered in consequence of Martin's pre-occupation, and Tom declared that Martin looked like a candidate for admission to an insane asylum; but Nell had her own way for once, in spite of them all. She, who had never before shown the slightest sign of vanity, now watched and guarded her face narrowly for fear that some spot or roughness might cloud its exquisite fairness. No day, however bright, could tempt her outside the door without a wide hat and a thick veil, and baby Maude's cold-cream was in constant demand.

I for one was heartily glad when the night of the ball arrived, for I was nearly worn out with her fussing and planning, and glad that it would so soon be over.

Nell had expressly stipulated that she should not be interrupted while dressing, and so I, after submitting myself to Lucile's skilful hands, went down to the library, where Charles and Tom, already dressed for the sacrifice, were waiting. Mother was sick with a headache and had retired, but father soon joined us, and we sat around the fire speculating idly as to the probable pleasure of the evening.

"I don't envy any of you," said father; "I think I shall be much more to be envied, sitting quietly at home here with my books, than you, Alberta, in your gray satin and diamonds, or Tom and Charles in their tight boots and gloves, or Eleanor either. By the way, where is she? Why does she not come down?"

Tom glanced at the clock disconsolately. "Half an hour later than we intended to start now," he said. "She's always behind time."

At that moment the door opened, and Eleanor, followed by Martin bearing her wrappings, came in. The light shone full upon her, and her almost wondrous beauty took us all by surprise.

She was always beautiful, even in the torn, untidy dresses and flying hair with which she usually appeared, but as she stood there, her wonderful hair dressed with the greatest care and elegance, the heavy braids and long curls falling low on her white shoulders, while a spray of white jessamine nestled lovingly in the sunny ripples over her wide forehead, her rich dress of a silvery blue, with trimmings of foam-like lace falling around her and trailing behind her in shimmering folds, her lovely neck and arms uncovered, save for the lace which shadowed them, her dark eyes glowing, the color deepening on her rounded cheeks, and her perfect face bright with happiness, I thought her beauty almost unearthly.

Even father was surprised out of his usual coldness, for as she lingered a little behind us as we went out, I saw him touch his lips to her forehead in a way which showed how very proud he was of her, and, when she joined us there were tears in her great eyes, and a new hope came into my heart that perhaps, in the coming years, they would grow nearer and dearer to each other.

Nell and I lingered in the cloak-room for a few minutes after our arrival, while the effects of our long ride were being removed as far as possible, and I noticed, although the room was very warm, that Nell shivered once or twice, and her hands trembled as she fastened my glove for me.

"Are you cold?" I asked, but she laughed at the thought.

"Not a bit, Bertie," she answered, "only a little nervous," and I, remembering my first ball, rallied her a little as we joined the gentlemen.

The rooms were nearly full, and as we walked slowly through them, stopping now and then to speak to our friends and acquaintances. I saw many admiring glances bestowed on the young beauty leaning on Tom's arm, and I also fancied that I saw her glance anxiously from one to another, under her long, black lashes, as though searching for some one.

The ride had tired me, and when the dancing commenced, I was glad to find a seat beside old Mrs. D'Arcy (who, by the way, being fair and immensely fleshy, was arrayed in crimson velvet,) and I sent Charles off to find his amusement elsewhere.

"Pretend that you are a bachelor," I said, laughingly, "and dance with the prettiest girls in the room. I am going to be a wall-flower for awhile," and then I sat talking with Mrs. D'Arcy, and watching Nell at intervals.

She had been dancing with Frank Marable, and now was resting for a moment talking in a listless pre-occupied way with the group of young gentlemen around her. Frank Marable was close beside her, his weak face flushed and eager, but she talked to them all without a shade of preference being shown to any one of them; and still her eyes wandered around the room and turned eagerly toward the entrance whenever the great doors opened, and there was a wearied, disappointed look about her mouth which made my heart ache for her.

I saw Tom bring up his college friends and introduce them to her with pardonable pride. I watched her as she moved away to join the dancers again, her hand resting on young Lord Seaton's arm, and her fair face looking up at him just as frankly and unaffectedly as though he were her brother Tom instead of the head of the wealthiest family in the county, and then I turned to hear Mrs. D'Arcy say emphatically:

"Miss Eleanor is the beauty of the ball, Mrs. Newcastle, there's no doubt about that," and I entirely agreed with her.

"Bertie," said Charles, an hour or so afterward, "who is that gentleman with your sister?"

"What gentleman?" I asked, bewildered, for I had quite lost sight of Nell during the dancing. "I have seen her with so many."

"He is extraordinarily tall," answered Charles. "I think he is a stranger."

"Extraordinarily tall"—like a flash the figure of the man I had seen at the gate that night came back to me, and I understood all Nell's planning and anxiety at once. It was to meet *him* that she had so earnestly wanted to come here;—the next question was—who was he?

"Bertie; Mrs. Newcastle, Captain Dartlan; Mr. Newcastle, Captain Dartlan."

It was Nell who spoke, and, as I acknowledged the captain's low bow, I saw that the wearied, disappointed look was gone, and that her face was fairly radiant with happiness.

"I am an old acquaintance of Miss Eleanor," said the captain. "I met her some two years ago while she was away at school, and am very happy to meet the sister Bertie of whom I have heard so much," and then, as we stood talking for a few moments, a waltz sounded from the adjoining room.

"Will you dance?" he said, looking down at Eleanor. I hoped that she would refuse, for I knew that father strongly objected to round dances for young girls, and I think she saw the appealing look on my face, for she answered slowly:

"I am afraid I must not—"

"Please—for my sake?"

He did not think I heard the last words, but I did, and I saw the bright flush deepen on her cheeks while her eyes flashed one defiant glance at me.

"As you please," she answered, and he led her away with a little look of triumph on his handsome face as she smiled up at him. A moment after Lord Seaton came and claimed my hand for the waltz, and I went away with a laughing recommendation to Charles to "go and do likewise."

A short time after Tom came to me with a little shade of trouble on his face, and with a word of apology to my partner, drew my hand through his arm and led me to a seat in a dimly-lighted ante-room.

"I don't half like the way Eleanor is going on," he said, in explanation. "I have seen that fellow up in London before now, and it is no good to her to know him. Can't you make her dance with some one else?"

"Where is she?" I asked, but just then the door at the other end of the room opened and two figures came in—Nell and Captain Dartlan. I knew them at once, although the light was very dim.

"Such a happy, happy evening!" I heard Nell say with a little sigh, and then I spoke.

"Nell—is that you?"

She came toward me slowly, while he stood looking after her.

"It is I," she said. "What do you want?"

I rose and put my arm around her. "I want you to stay with me a little while, Nell. Excuse yourself to Captain Dartlan, please, for we are going soon, and you will probably have no opportunity to speak to him again."

The captain came forward as I spoke. "You are not going now?" he said, in a surprised tone.

"No," answered Nell, and then as she hesitated I repeated what I had said to her.

"I have been telling Nell that she had better excuse herself to you, for she has been neglecting some of her friends shamefully, and must make her peace with them before we go."

"Ah—indeed?" said the captain, in no wise disconcerted, and then, apparently just perceiving Tom, he bowed and smiled.

"Mr. Sylvester?" I am most happy. We have met before, I remember."

"I believe so," answered Tom, shortly. "Come, Nell."

For one moment her bright head drooped on my shoulder, and in that instant I heard a passionate, hurried whisper. "Oh, Bertie! you will not—you *cannot* be so cruel!" and then she drew away from me with the old defiant look in her eyes. "I have promised Captain Dartlan the next waltz," she said: "after that I will come to you;" and so I was forced to let her do as she would, for I knew her too well to try to govern her.

After the next waltz, true to her word, Nell came to me leaning on the Captain's arm.

"I'm going now," he said, "since you will dance with me no more, Miss Sylvester," and then, turning his handsome face suddenly toward me, "I am to stay in the neighborhood for awhile, Mrs. Newcastle; have I your permission to call occasionally?"

With Nell's eyes fastened on me with such an appealing expression, it was simply impossible to refuse. "Thanks, and good-night," he said. "Good-night, Miss Sylvester."

"Good-night." I saw the lingering clasp of their hands. "Good-night, *Laurie*." The last word was spoken almost in a whisper, but I heard it plainly, and my heart sank. Were all my plans for my beautiful sister coming to nought in this way?"

The rest of the ball was rather a drag to me. I was tired and out of sorts. Nell flirted and danced promiscuously, but I saw that all the pleasure of the ball was over for her, and I was heartily glad when we arrived home.

Captain Dartlan called several times during the next few weeks, and, although I never quite liked him, I was forced to acknowledge that he was a very pleasant and gentlemanly man. He talked politics with father, headaches with mother, read to me, made love to baby Maude, sang, walked and rode with Nell, and made himself generally agreeable; but I never could feel very cordially toward him, for it seemed hard that Nell, whom I had loved and cared for all her life, should let him, a comparative stranger, come between us; and to add to my troubles, Tom came to

me one day in a great fever, he had seen Captain Dartlan kiss Eleanor as she sat at the piano.

"The girl is crazy," he said, his honest English face crimson with indignation. "I hate to get her into a muss with father, but I can't stand everything, and I have endured Captain Dartlan's visits as long as I can;" and then he calmed down and told me all he knew of the Captain's past life. Not much, it is true, but enough to show that, as he had said, it was "no good" to Nell to know him, much less to make him her hero, as she was evidently doing.

"I wish you would speak to her, Bertie," he said, as he rose to go. "Perhaps it will make her more careful. I can't bear to know that he has it in his power to go back to London, and tell all the fellows at his club about kissing my sister—and I am sure he will do it. You'll speak to her?"

"Yes," I answered. "I will do what I can."

The next day Captain Dartlan called again; I had just driven out to make some calls when he arrived, but returned shortly after, and as Lucile was removing my wrappings, Nell came into the room. I saw at once that something was the matter, for she was very pale and her eyes were swollen and red, therefore I dismissed Lucile as quickly as possible, and going to her put my arms around her, and said, as I had been used to do when she was a wee girl, "Tell sister all about it, dearie."

Well as I knew Nell's passionate nature, I was shocked and surprised at the storm of sobs and tears which answered me.

"Oh, Bertie, Bertie, Bertie!" she cried, "go down and say a word for Laurie and me. They are both against him; they are sending him away, and I love him dearly, dearly, dearly!"

"For Laurie and me," had it come to this? "For Laurie and me."

I tried to reason with her; I told her, gently as I could, all that Tom had told me, but she only shook her beautiful head.

"It makes no difference," she said. "I heard all that years ago, when I first knew him. Poor Laurie!—everybody is against him but me—even *you*, Bertie, and I thought you loved me."

It was very hard to bear her reproaches, it was very hard to see her unhappiness, but I could do nothing and say nothing to help or comfort her, and I was immensely relieved when a message came from father requesting us both to come down into the library.

Of the three occupants of the room, Captain Dartlan was apparently the coolest and most unconcerned. Father looked disturbed and ill at ease, Tom was hot and angry, but Captain Dartlan smiled and bowed as we entered, and placed chairs for us in his usual polite way. He was, to all appearances, as nonchalant and as much at ease as ever.

It was a very painful interview; father said a great many hard and unjust things, and, although Nell bore it quietly as long as he only blamed her, the moment he began to speak of Captain Dartlan her temper flashed out.

"You may talk to *me* as much as you like," she said. "I don't care; but I won't sit quietly and hear you speak of *him*. He isn't to blame for asking me to be his wife, and as for those things which Tom"—here Tom received a scorching glance from her flashing eyes)—"which Tom has seen fit to tell against him, if he were wealthy or titled you would overlook them entirely; besides," with a little faltering in her clear voice, "that is past and gone—he will do better now."

There was a glow of admiration on the captain's face as he looked at her, standing so proudly erect and speaking so earnestly in his defence, but he saw that her fiery words would do no good.

"It is no use, Nell," he said, laying aside his indifferent manner, and rising with a moody shadow on his face, "they won't give a fellow a chance to reform, even when he wants to. I will go now, I think."

"Go?—go where?" The color faded from her face, and she caught his arm with both hands.

"To the dev—. No, not that exactly," with a bitter laugh. "No matter where, Nell, only good-bye."

"Oh, Laurie!" still she clung to him pale and shivering, "*don't* leave me so."

He turned toward us with a sudden manliness on his dark face. "You are all very hard on me," he said, "you won't give me a fair chance at all, but I swear to you that I would make Nell happy if you would give her to me. I don't deny anything that you have said; I *have* been bad and wicked, but I love Nell, and will do better for her sake."

There was something in the simple, earnest words which went to my heart, and convinced me that he meant what he said; I rose and held my hand out to him.

"I am sorry this has happened," I said. "If you are really going, let me wish you good fortune, Captain Dartlan."

"Thank you."

As he clasped my hand, it came to me dimly that perhaps we had been very unjust to him and Nell,—what right had we to make them both so unhappy?

"Good-bye, Nell," he said again; and then, bending low, he kissed her gently. "God bless you always, my darling." And he was gone.

After that day a great change came over Nell; she grew quiet and reserved, and all the old bright ways were laid aside. Toward father her manner was entirely altered; she was coldly respectful to him—no more and no less. She obeyed him implicitly in the slightest things without a word of demur, or a sign of unwillingness. But I think, as the days went by, he would have welcomed a glimpse of the old-time temper—a return of the careless, wild ways—a flash of the girlish defiance—or some little act of rebellion, which would have seemed like the naughty Nell of old; but it never came.

Of Captain Dartlan she never spoke—but, often, as she sat sewing or reading, her hands would drop into her lap, and she would sit thinking intently, with the worn, wearied look which had come to her of late shading her face, until my heart ached for her, for I knew, only too well, where her thoughts were.

I longed to comfort her in her trouble, and once or twice I went to her and tried to make her realize that I felt for her, and pitied her with all my heart—but she turned way from me coldly. "You are very kind," she would say, "but you don't know anything about it; you only trouble me, and I can bear it better alone. Leave me to myself, please, Bertie." And she would unclasp my arms with a gentle firmness not to be resisted, and put me away from her.

So the days passed on until spring came, and on one of the first warm days, as I was passing through the hall, I met Eleanor coming in from one of her solitary rambles; her long trailing skirts were muddied and torn, her hat was swinging by the strings from her arm, and her bright hair was tangled and blown about by the wind—but her face was flushed, her eyes were bright, her whole appearance was changed. It was the beautiful, naughty Nell of old, who passed me with a nod and smile, and went up the long stairway, her wet skirts clinging around her feet, her shawl dragging behind her, singing softly to herself as she had been used to do.

When I went up-stairs she sat by the window in the nursery, with baby Maude sleeping on her lap, and a new look of happiness and peace on her beautiful face—but she said nothing, and I dreading to bring the shadow back, asked no questions.

That night as she lay asleep in her room, I went in on some trifling errand, and stood for a few minutes looking down at her. How beautiful she was with the warm glow of sleep on her face, her bright hair brushed back from her white forehead, and her lips slightly parted with a happy smile! but even as I looked at her she moved uneasily, and as I bent to kiss her, a name, long unheard, came to my ears, "*Laurie.*"

That was the last time that I ever saw her as she was then; the last time for many years that my lips touched hers; the last time, although I did not know it then.

The next night she was gone, leaving no trace behind her by which we could follow her, no word of farewell, and taking with her only a curl of baby Maude's soft hair.

"She has made her bed," said father, "let her lie in it," and thenceforward Eleanor's name was never heard in the house which had been her home all her lifetime.

I sorrowed long and deeply for my beautiful sister; at first I hoped that she would send me some word or message, but the days became weeks, the weeks months, and at last the months became years, and no word came.

Charles and I stayed at Nuthall until the next Autumn, and then went back to London, but I did not feel like entering society just then, and so after awhile our house in London was closed again, and we went on the continent, for I was weak and ill, and change of air and scene was recommended to me.

My little boy was born in a pleasant little village of Brittany, close on the coast, and during all the long Summer after he came to us we remained there, enjoying the plain, simple life to the utmost. For the next two or three years we wandered hither and thither—now in Italy, now in France, and it was not until five years after Eleanor's flight that we returned to England again.

I was well and strong then, and as Charles was fond of company, we were soon plunged into the midst of fashionable dissipation, and by degrees the constant worrying and anxiety concerning my lost one grew less wearing; but one day as Charles and I were out driving it all came back to me with cruel force, for as we rolled along I saw among the hurrying crowd of pedestrians a tall, slight figure, which made my heart throb strangely. I caught Charles's arm, and half rose to my feet.

"Oh, Charles, Charles!" I cried, "stop the carriage—speak to her! Don't you see her?"

"Where?—who?" I think a suspicion entered his head that I had suddenly become insane; but as I pointed out the straight, lithe figure, he answered the question in my eyes. "It's Nell," he said briefly; "wait a moment," and he sprang to the ground and followed her, while I sank back on the cushions and tried to wait patiently.

Yes, it was Nell; for although her face was hidden by a thick veil, there was no mistaking the tall, slender figure, the wonderful coil of golden hair, and the graceful walk which had been so characteristic of her in her girlish days. Nell certainly, although the proud head was bowed a little, and her movements were slower and more sedate than in the old times; and waiting there, my heart went out to her as it had never done before, dearly as I had loved her, for the heavy black garments which she wore told me that a great grief had come to her. Poor, naughty Nell!

In an almost incredibly short space of time Charles was back again, breathless but eager and excited.

"Bertie," he said, "I was right. She lives near here. Will you go to her now?" And then, seeing my answer in my face, he gave a direction to the coachman, and turning into a side street, we stopped before a plain, dreary-looking house, which displayed in one of the front windows a placard announcing "Rooms to rent."

A sour-faced woman opened the door and greeted us with a threatening scowl.

"Yes, Mrs. Dartlan," (for Charles had inquired for her by that name,) "Mrs. Dartlan *did* live there—second floor back, but she didn't see anybody."

"Tain't no use to ask you up," as Charles insisted on entering, and then becoming suddenly civil as he put a gold piece into her hand—"I hope you are friends of hers, for she's a sweet-spoken young thing, and in a deal of trouble."

I shall never forget the moment that we stood, half-irresolute, before the door of the "second floor back." I shall never forget how my heart bounded as her voice answering Charles's knock bade us "come in."

Charles opened the door softly, and for an instant I stood looking in. She was sitting by the window in the old attitude, her hands lying idly in her lap, her head turned away from us; her bonnet and mantle were thrown on a chair in the old careless fashion, and her comb having fallen from her hair, the bright ripples and waves fell over her shoulders and half-veiled her as she sat.

One moment I stood there, and then as she turned her head languidly, her great black eyes met mine, and with one glad cry I rushed to her and clasped her in my arms. "Oh, Nell! naughty Nell—found at last!"

After the first confusion was over, and Charles had discreetly left us together, my heart sank as I saw how worn and thin her beautiful face was, and heard the sharp, hacking cough which seemed to trouble her so. "Have you been ill?" I asked, anxiously.

"No—no more than this. I shall never be well again, Bertie, I have not been well since—" her voice faltered, and she pressed her hand to her side, "not since Laurie died—last year," and then she bowed her poor, tired head on my shoulder and sobbed like a child.

"We were very happy, Bertie," she said when she grew calmer. "Laurie was so good, and we loved each other so. Oh, Bertie! Bertie! you don't know how hard it was when he died," and then, as we sat together, I heard the patter of little feet on the stairs, a weak hand lifted the latch, and a childish voice cried:

"Mamma—mamma!—are you there?"

Eleanor's face flushed slightly. "It is little Nell," she said, and then the door opened and a wee, elfish child came in, and, running to her, clambered into her lap, while Eleanor looked at me with a little of the old girlish brightness in her face.

Nell's child!—how strange it seemed!—Nell's child, and yet so exactly like Nell herself, that it seemed as though I were again in short clothes, full of worries and anxiety about the naughty little sprite, as I had been in old times.

"Poor mamma!" said she, patting Eleanor's tear-stained face, and scowling at me under her black brows. "Don't cry—she's a naughty woman—don't cry!" and then Eleanor, holding her close, told her who I was.

"Aunt Bertie?" said the little one, doubtfully, still eyeing me askance. "Do you love her, mamma?"

"Yes, my darling—darling."

"Did papa love her?"

"Yes; she was kind to him when he was very unhappy."

The child's loyal heart was satisfied and her face brightened; she slipped down from Eleanor's lap, and came to me. "Kiss me, Aunt Bertie," she said, "*I* love you too."

And so Nell came back to me, but not for long. She was so quiet and uncomplaining that I hoped against hope all the long winter, but before the earliest Spring flowers began to bloom she left me—this time forever.

"Take care of Nell, for my sake, Bertie," she said; and then with the name of the man whom she had loved so dearly on her lips—"Laurie, dear Laurie!"—she was gone.

Years have passed since then; there are silver threads in my hair, but I live my youth over again with my children. And, among the merry group of boys and girls there is not one whom I love better than her whose tall, lithe figure, flowing yellow hair, and great black eyes seem so like the sister I have lost. She is naughty and wilful, careless and thoughtless, but I love her more dearly than I can tell, and although father is very kind to my children, and pets them in his grave way, it is Nell who is the nearest to his heart.

He never rebukes her, he never notices her wild ways, but his eyes follow her lovingly wherever she goes; and often, as she sits at his feet in the twilight, leaning her head on his knee, and he, smoothing her tangled hair softly, looks down at her with a half remorseful tenderness on his stern face, I know that he is thinking, not of her, but of the fair young girl whose presence once brightened the old house as hers does now—thinking of the old times and of beautiful, naughty Nell.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER.

When Margaret Denbigh came into the world she found herself in a home of comparative wealth, in the best society of Locustburgh: her father was one of the most flourishing lawyers in the place, a jovial sort of fellow, who loved hospitality and pedigree. The death of her mother, when she was fifteen, besides leaving her thus early mistress of her father's house, distracted her attention from the ordinary pursuits of girls of her age; and consequently, when she was twenty, though she could entertain with the grace and composure of well-seasoned dowagers, yet most of the things which girls learn as naturally as A, B, C—theoretical grammar and mathematics—were dead letters to her, and what geography she knew had been culled from the conversation of her father's visitors. To be sure, she could play bewitching dancing tunes on the piano that would make one *chasses* and *dos-à-dos* in spite of one's self; she could sing plaintive little love-songs that would set one's heart in a flutter, coquettish ballads running over with fun and melody; and she possessed a fund of small-talk, sprightly and good-natured, which served well for the nonce, but could hardly be turned to account should she ever need to earn a livelihood. Moreover, she had a comely face of her own, with eyes that borrowed hue and expression from the subject in hand, a lithe willowy shape, a hand that was a model for any sculptor—indeed, it was a saying in the family, that the Denbigh hand never toiled—together with a graciousness of manner that might have been learned in courts, if Margaret had ever been outside Locustburgh.

The Denbighs occupied at that time a spacious house in Pimlico Place; they drove their carriage, and dressed in purple and fine linen; and if they did not subsist upon nectar and ambrosia, it was because the market of Locustburgh and adjacent cities did not afford such diet.

A traveller through Locustburgh to-day would not fail to remark the elegance of the old Denbigh estate—by which name it still goes, though having long ago passed into other hands—partly on account of its situation, standing, as it does, on a ridge of high land, with a look-out over the sea and the sand-hills on one side, and a vast slope of champaign country on the other, where the shifting colors of the sky and fields make the picture always new, and the tender outlines of remote hills are forever changing and receding into the distance, till they seem little more than wavering coils of vapor burnished by the sun. In Margaret's girlhood it was a house sufficiently elegant, now it is almost a palace; the house itself has been enlarged and improved; there are French windows that invite you to step into delightful garden-paths, where the sweet-brier blesses you as you pass, where the fountain croons, and golden bees hang on the lips of the flowers, where red climbing roses and blue wisterias and yellow honeysuckles interlace, where the sweet disorder of Nature is guided, not held in subjection, by the wand of Art. Within there are carpets like the moss in some woodland hollow; pictures flash upon you and transport you to the valley of the Odenwald, to *Mer de Glace*. Here you go boating down the Rhine, there you glide in the shadow of Venetian ruins; or you camp in the Yosemite, or are dazzled by some Pompeian interior, or lose yourself on star-lit deserts on the frozen steppes of Russia, in haunted forests of the Old World. Beautiful statues confront you at every turn; mirrors repeat the bewildering effect; delicate laces, like frost on the pane, curtain the windows; musical clocks echo the hour from room to room, like the distant chiming of cathedral bells; there are trained servants, who move with the precision of machinery; in the manner of a fairy-tale your wish is gratified before you speak it; the entire ménage seems under the influence of a splendid magic.

But you ask, "What has Margaret to do with all this, since the mansion in Pimlico Place has passed from the Denbigh possession?" True; what has she to do with it? What have any of us to with the things that have passed from our grasp—things, mayhap, which we were wont to hold lightly enough, but upon which we now look longingly backward?

In those early, far-off days, when Margaret wore dainty white muslins, miracles of fluting and embroidery; when she curled her tawny locks, and hung tiny gold bells in her pink ears, and coiled about throat and arms the gold and enameled device of a serpent threading a garland of flowers—days when she danced and sang, and rode over bog and fence, and was ready for any sport; when she could spend half a forenoon battling with the frolic surf, and issue warm and rosy, crowned with little rings of shining hair, till she seemed a being made of the shifting tints of a sea-shell; when she could use her oar with the bravest, and handled her fan with no whit less grace for that—in those days when lovers were plenty, and fortune seemed never weary of favoring Margaret, there lived in the street below the garden of Pimlico Place one Ben Berners, a sailor, who, throwing a careless glance one afternoon across the neighboring wall, perceived that Miss Margaret was passing fair, as she walked in sun and shade where the lime-trees shook out their fragrant blossoms, and never wished to look away again. But Margaret walked up and down all the same, reading her novel as she went, utterly unconscious that Fate had her that instant in contemplation, and had, moreover, singled her out as one to whom discipline would not come amiss. Perhaps, as Margaret sunned herself there among the flowers, it occurred to Fortune that she had been overlavish of her sweets in one direction, while others had passed unheeded from the feast of life; and so, proceeding to mend matters, and yet loath to leave Margaret without a drop of honey in her cup, she began by sending a tortoise-colored cat after Margaret's favorite white fan-tail, and Ben Berners after the cat! The first thing that Miss Denbigh saw was the small tiger with the dove fluttering and panting in its mouth, and she straightway threw her novel into the hedge, and rushed after them with a shriek like the last trump, and ran plump against Ben in the act of springing over the wall, with the dove, more frighted than hurt, in his brown hands.

"Oh, how did you get it away from her?" cried Margaret, with eyes only for the dove. "How glad I am! how I thank you!" nestling the bird on her shoulder. She thought he was some wayfarer from the street below, some workman on the road, perhaps; she had acquaintance with the garb of a sailor, and it gave her the impression of shabbiness. "How the poor thing pants!" she continued. "Do you think it is hurt?" And then she raised her eyes for the first time to his face, and stood dumb and fascinated before the eloquent earnestness of his gaze. What were those velvety eyes trying to say, or rather, what were they saying in spite of themselves? Speaking a language, doubtless, as old as Adam, but new to Margaret, among whose lovers none had worn this, which perplexed, and pleased, and provoked her by turns.

"No," said Ben, slowly, as if he would like to spin the moment out indefinitely, without removing his eyes from hers, "the bird is only bruised. Let me bathe it at the fountain;" which appeared a plausible mode of eking out the *tête-à tête*. And then they walked together under the flowering limes, and leaned over the edge of the basin and chatted.

"Once," said he, "when I went down in Great Harbor to bring up an anchor that had been lost, I found a ring with a sapphire in it as big as a dew-drop. Some lady must have been dabbling in the water as you are doing when she dropped it. I never found an owner. Ay! there goes your own ring, Miss Denbigh. Lucky you're not out at sea," reaching an arm for it.

"If I were, would you dive for it?"

"I might not be there," he answered, simply, holding the rescued ring to the light. "Ay! a regard ring. I fancy the sentiment. Give it to me for the sapphire? No, no; I was joking. This is worth something to you. You had it from somebody. The sapphire—I don't value it at a farthing; it wouldn't be fair."

"Take it, please," said Margaret. "You saved my dove—accept my regards in the ring; it is only a class ring—nobody's gift."

"I will take it, then, if your regards go with it, and you shall have the sapphire. When I was in India, I saw a diamond that would have made your heart beat double—"

"When you were in India! Oh, how I should love to go sailing round the world! Touching everywhere, tasting adventure!"

"Should you, though?" eagerly. "There's nothing easier."

"Miss," said a maid, suddenly appearing, "the tea-bell has rung, and your pa is a-waiting."

"I beg pardon," he said; "I have kept you. Good-night, but not good-bye;" and he had leaped the wall and vanished.

The next evening somebody pulled the bell at Pimlico Place and left a small package for Miss Denbigh. It was the sapphire ring. Margaret put it upon her finger. Among all her possessions there was nothing so magnificent; it shone like a star fallen from the Milky Way.

"What have you there, Margaret?" asked her father. And then she told him the story.

"Give it to me," he said. "You should not accept such a gift from an inferior; he will be offering his heart next. It was very well to reward him as you did, but this is a different affair."

"Yes," said Margaret, drawing it off slowly; "you may send it back. It is a splendid nebula."

"The young fellow had better give it to his sweetheart," said Mr. Denbigh, taking it from her; while all at once, to Margaret, among her other luxuries, the vision of that sunburned, handsome face, with its waves of chestnut hair, the dazzlement of eyes, the witchery of its smile, wrought an instant's confusion in her soul.

Ben Berners had his ring again, with a brief note praising its beauty and his generosity, thanking him with all her heart, and hinting of the happiness it would give somebody one day.

"It shall make nobody happy but you," he said, as he scaled the garden wall that night, and tossed it into the basin of the fountain, where an eternal fury of foam hid it from view; but the note he carried with him to sea.

From time to time there found their way to Margaret's hands, across the ocean, delicate pink corals from Naples, fanciful devices from Japan and India, curious inland things redolent of sandal and camphor wood, Brazilian butterflies like flashes of lapis lazuli, wonderful perfumes in barbarous vials, that breathed a hint of Arabian Nights, strange and beautiful things culled from ocean hollows. As the name of the donor never accompanied these gifts, she could do no less than keep the secret, and put the baubles to use for other lovers to admire and wonder at, as they whiled the hours away with flatteries and flirtations. One day Mr. Denbigh, who had been long ailing, decided upon taking a trip to the West Indies; and who should be mate on the Flying Fish but Ben Berners? They being the only passengers, and he the only person on board upon whom they had ever laid eyes before, it was not strange that, from time to time, they should fall into the habit of chatting together of Locustburgh and the sea and foreign lands. Sometimes Mr. Denbigh would obligingly fall asleep, and leave the young folks to carry the conversation wherever impulse might lead. And so, as the hours drifted by, as they hung becalmed beneath sultry skies or flew beneath the blast, as Ben waited upon Miss Margaret by inches, and seemed naturally to have established an intimacy with the name, he almost forgot that in Locustburgh they moved in different worlds, so to speak; that in Locustburgh he could not sit at Margaret's feet, nor lift her fan, nor fetch and carry for her whim, nor wrap her shawls about her, nor in any way approach, as here it seemed his natural right to do. Indeed, he so far forgot the gulf between them that one night, as they slipped beneath a moonless, star-sown sky, and listened to the ripple of waves about the prow, while Mr. Denbigh nodded—he so far, so very far, forgot himself as to take Margaret's hand—the white Denbigh hand that had no acquaintance with toil—and ask her to be his wife! To speak truly, Margaret allowed her hand to rest in his for a breathing space, while a thrill of happiness overcame her, vibrating to her finger tips and shaking the heart in her bosom till it beat in great undulations. Then she remembered Locustburgh and the gulf, and the pride of the Denbighs said to happiness, "Avaunt! I can do without you, rather than lose one jot of Mrs. Grundy's favor, or abate one tittle of social position." And then she drew her hand away coldly—so coldly that he could seem to feel it turn to ice beneath his touch, and replied,

"Mr. Berners, my father would never listen to such a thing. It can never be. You must understand that I thank you all the same. Let us change the subject."

Of course there were no more happy *tête-à-têtes* between the two, when the solemn twilights drew down upon the sea, when sunrises touched the world into splendid life—no more conjecturings of "Fate, free-will, foreknowledge absolute." He handed her cushions, brought her wraps and work, was perfect as ever in his devotion, but he in nowise obtruded himself: he had taken his stand on the hither side of the gulf. A few days ago and he had been one of them, thinking their thoughts, speaking their language, giving and taking freely: to-day he was of the crowd only whose business it was rather to "tar the rope and hoist the rigging" than to sit like a fine gentleman at his sweetheart's side and discourse of airy nothings.

On the return voyage Mr. Denbigh's thread of life snapped suddenly; they buried him in the sea, and through Margaret's frenzy of grief there was no more compassionate or respectful friend in the wide world than Ben Berners. He seemed to forget his own separate existence in solicitude for her; he consoled her with the divinely sweet assurances of a faith of whose power she had but dimly conceived; he beguiled her with word-paintings of the East—that great treasure-house of romance and color—with incidents of travel by land and sea, with odd characteristics of nations and places; he repeated pages of poetry to her, flavored with the adventure and unrest of the sea; he sang to her little songs in Spanish and Hindostanee, sketched the icebergs that had threatened destruction on previous voyages, snipped out profiles of a score of the strange faces with which he had shipped—put forth every energy to interest her, as naturally and sweetly as a tree puts forth its blossoms—but yet remained on the hither side of the social gulf so persistently that Margaret began to doubt if he had wished to cross it after all.

Years before Margaret had wondered if life was to go on to the end in the same humdrum fashion, with nothing happening, with nothing to mar the monotony; indeed, she had rather aspired for some occasion in which she might show herself a heroine, able to rise superior to the dictates of circumstances and society and worldly wisdom, and the opportunity had arrived only to find her unable to cope with it; the monotony of her existence had been interrupted by terrible events; death had required her father, and pride had sacrificed her lover! Berners left her at the house in Pimlico Place, and set off again for a long voyage. "If," he said, in parting—"if at any time you should need a friend, Messrs. Tar and Gunnel will send you my address;" but he made no iterations of his love; and after this, business carried him so promptly from one port to another that it was full twenty years before he found himself in Locustburgh again. He had received no tidings of Margaret in the meantime. She had never applied to him through Messrs. Tar and Gunnel for friendship or favor. She might be dead or married, but, if living, surely the gulf between them had shrunken wonderfully; for he returned to Locustburgh a personage whom that little world delighted to honor, since he was a man known outside. He had played the part of hero in more than one shipwreck; he had been an explorer to the north pole; he knew every corner of the world as familiarly as the by-ways of Locustburgh; he was a man to whom one might listen without ever growing weary. He had hobnobbed with prince and peasant; he had fought with pirates at the Formosas.

Nobody remembered any longer the days when he was a ragged urchin hanging about the wharves, nor when he shipped before the mast: there was an auriferous atmosphere enveloping him which hid all defects of pedigree. The first thing he did was to purchase the old house in Pimlico Place, and improve it as described, where he entertained the first in the land—wits, artists, inventors, statesmen, and the literati. The next effort was to seek out Margaret, which proved to be no such easy task as he had imagined, for the Denbigh name had almost faded to a myth by this time; indeed, this person believed she was dead, that one that she had married, a third that she was living in penury. But by dint of patient inquiry he found some one who remembered that Mr. Denbigh's estate was deeply involved at the time of his death, that there had been a mere pittance left for the support of his only child; that furthermore, when this pittance was nearly exhausted, the gentleman who had bought the house in Pimlico Place, in having the basin of the fountain repaired, had discovered there a ring of great value—a splendid sapphire—which doubtless had belonged to some dead and gone ancestor of the Denbighs, and which would have brought a pretty sum in the market; but when the ring had been carried to Margaret, and the manner of its discovery related, she had burst into a passion of tears, and would in no case part with it for love or money. "It was the gift of the only lover I ever had," she said, which was not quite true, affirmed Margaret's historian; "for though the younger fry deserted her when her fortunes changed, yet Major Burgess would have had her to do the honors of his establishment, and Parson Bird invited her to cater for his six fledgelings. But law! them Denbigh hands were never made to toil—more's the pity—for she was took with the rheumatics dreadful in both of 'em, as well as in her feet; and she was that bad, at last accounts, that she couldn't so much as wash her own face, nor comb out her own hair, nor brush the flies away, nor hold a book, nor put foot to the floor, but was fain to sit alone day after day, with no occupation but her thoughts, which, like enough, were bitter-sweet. And that's all I know about the poor soul; she may be in the almshouse—she may be in the grave!"

Captain Berners drew his hand across his eyes to hide a mistiness there, and passed out into his garden, and walked under the old lime-trees full in bloom, and sat down on the edge of the fountain, and tried to think. A mighty sense of restlessness possessed him; his heart seemed beating its way out of his bosom. Somebody in the neighborhood was hushing a child with some solemn nursery hymn; the bells were ringing ten from house to house, from steeple to steeple. He let himself out by the postern-gate, and walked like one hunted through by-ways and alleys, through streets that had grown up since he knew the very spots stretching away in pleasant pasture lands, where gay flowers and luscious berries grew. Suddenly an alarm of fire awoke all the echoes; and yet with no definite object in view, led by an invisible but imperative will, he followed the eager footsteps of the rabble that seemed to spring "full statured" from the dust of the streets, till they paused before a tenement-house, about which the flames were wreathing themselves in garlands of fatal beauty. "There's only one person left in the house," a by-stander was saying; "and she might be saved if she could help herself."

"Why in the deuce doesn't she help herself?" asked another.

"For the best of reasons: she is like one bound hand and foot. They say she hasn't stirred an inch this ten year. A good while ago she belonged to the cussed aristocracy; but her money leaked out of her pockets, and the rheumatics set into her bones—"

"She will never die of rheumatics at this rate; the old rat-trap will fall in half an hour. See, they're going to abandon hope; they're taking off the ladders and ropes. *Her* last chance has give up the ghost. Ain't there anybody to do anything for the poor soul? It's awful! I feel the flames in my own throat! Jove! there's a spunky fellow: he's going to run an awful risk; he don't mind a scorching! Blazes! he's made of asbestos, and no mistake. Jove! it's Captain Berners himself! If I had *his* luck, I wouldn't risk my neck for no woman alive!"

In that most fearful moment, when the flames were menacing at her door, and the roar from the street below came to her like the soughing of the wind in the limes at Pimlico Place, and the hot air scorched her cheek and stifled her—in that instant a superhuman strength came to Margaret; she rose from her bed of pain; she traversed the length of her small room like some caged creature, and looked down from her window into the dense smoke and darkness lit by flashes of light. A wall of flame closed in behind her where she stood, like some ancient picture, outlined against a ground of gold, her long hair sweeping her shoulders, her eyes dilated with horror, her hands folded in supplication. And so Captain Berners found her, singing a sweet old hymn with which her mother may have lulled her asleep in the long twilights, making her exit like some saint and martyr of old; and so, scarred and fainting, he tore her from the arms of death, and descended amidst the shouts of the throng below.

When Margaret awoke she raised herself on an elbow and looked into a familiar garden, where the sunshine shot sparks from the fountain, and an odor of lime-flowers filled the air. For an instant she was Margaret Denbigh and twenty again, at home, in the first flush of youth and fortune. But who was that gentleman loitering there, with bent head, and silver threading the darkness of his hair? Had she ever met him before, under the limes? Ay, but there had been a gulf yawning between them once. Had time bridged it? No, no; it was wider than ever—she was an old woman now, not a fit sweetheart for one like him! She dressed herself and limped down into the garden to meet him—fire and fright, and perhaps joy had somehow slain the disease in her bones.

"Yesterday you saved my life," she said, "and life is sweet to the merest clod. I wish to thank you, while I return something that belongs to you."

"You have a great deal that belongs to me which you can never return, which I would never receive," he answered, regarding this ghostly thing that had once been proud Margaret Denbigh, rosy and dazzling and jocund.

"It is this sapphire ring," she pursued; "I have worn it on a chain about my neck, day and night, these ten years. I could see it shine in the dead of night, and say to myself, 'He is thinking of me.' But, of course, that is all past and done with; that was when I was fair to see. Take it, and give it to the woman you love—to your—wife!"

"Margaret," he said, taking her thin hand instead, "I have no wife—shall never have any wife—but you. I gave it to the woman I loved years ago; if I take it now, will you wear a wedding-ring in its place?"

"A wedding-ring for me," she laughed—"for me, old and wizened and sick and poor! Do not think that I will accept the sacrifice because you loved me when I was a fair, proud fool!"

"In your fairest days, Margaret, I loved you less than I love you now. Am I not old and gray myself? Yet for this moment I have toiled and waited and hungered. Will you deny me the wages of a lifetime of love?"

And so when you see Mrs. Berners, like some pale flower that the wind has shaken, moving in stately-wise among her guests, you would hardly guess through what a sea of affliction the *ignus fatuus* of pride has led her; but when the long sunbeams slant through the lime-trees beneath which Captain and Mrs. Berners walk, "like two lovers lately wed," while a crowd of white fan-tails pack at their feet and flutter about their heads—when you watch the color ripple on her cheek and the smile dimple about her mouth, and youth and joy blossom in the eyes, you would say with the captain himself, perhaps, "Better late than never." For what signifies the pride of life, estates, and fame, and all the goods that flesh is heir to, if love, the one guest for whom the banquet is spread, be absent? Yet, doubtless, you think that Margaret Denbigh deserved nothing half so gracious? Perhaps not; but if our deserts were measured, to whose share would Heaven fall?—*Bazar.*

☞ A GLIMPSE AT THE OTHER WORLD.—Mrs. Gardiner, wife of a Michigan farmer, recently died under circumstances the most extraordinary. Two of her sisters were dead, one but lately, only a few weeks ago. The cause of her death was a congestive chill, and after she had been considered dead for six hours, and was being prepared for the grave, she returned to consciousness and talked freely with her attendants. She stated to those around her, that she had been to the better land and had seen both of her departed sisters, with other friends; that it was a most beautiful land—beyond all description! She said that she had permission to return to tell living friends what she had seen, but that she was anxious to again return. She passed away soon after making her statement, and seemed overflowing with joy and happiness. The Detroit Tribune says there can be no question as to the circumstances above stated.

☞ Apropos of the horse disease, it may be mentioned that the whole number of horses in the United States is 8,619,219. Of these 7,132,849 are on farms, and 1,547,370 in cities and towns and otherwise not on farms. The number in each State is as follows: Alabama 92,807, Arizona 4432, Arkansas 202,240, California 241,146, Colorado 18,317, Connecticut 54,139, Dakota 3243, Delaware 18,633, Florida 14,451, Georgia 110,237, Idaho 2775, Illinois 1,017,644, Indiana 553 203, Iowa 482,786, Kansas 152,000, Kentucky 351,200, Louisiana 62,584, Maine 79 781, Maryland 102,216, Massachusetts 80,260, Michigan 253,670, Minnesota 102 678, Mississippi 104,600, Missouri 545,822, Montana 6783, Nebraska 33,904, Nevada 14,400, New Hampshire 43,335, New Jersey 103,663, New Mexico 26,500, New York 856,241, North Carolina 114,406, Ohio 701,664, Oregon 64,625, Pennsylvania 611,488, Rhode Island 11 113, South Carolina 54,052, Tennessee 273 200, Texas, 547,641, Utah 14,281, Vermont 69,775, Virginia 68,938, Washington 13 923, West Virginia 99,362, Wisconsin 270,083, Wyoming 3763.

☞ A lady of an Eastern city was riding in a street-car the other day, the only other occupant being a tall, lank gentleman, with cadaverous countenance. The lady was dressed in deep mourning, and her fair and interesting face looked out from a shadowy veil. After riding a block or two, the gentleman edged up to her quietly and said, "Lady!" She did not understand him at first, and did not look around, supposing that he was talking to himself. "Lady," said the firm, deep voice. She turned around, and met the full gaze of the cavernous eyes. "Lady," said the speaker, coming an inch nearer, his eyes looking sympathizingly at her black attire, "lady, wouldn't you like something in the tombstone line?" The car-strap was pulled, a veil let down, and the lady vacated the car, with a lurking smile on her face.

☞ "How have you been able to escape all the catastrophes of the Commune?" said the Russian ambassador to Baron Rothschild. "Because we Israelites have the privilege of crossing the Red Sea with dry feet."

☞ A music-teacher was tried in the scales and found wanting.

☞ The best hand to accompany a lady vocalist—A husband.

☞ "Poor Joel, his head is level now if it never was before," is the inscription on a tombstone in an Iowa graveyard.

☞ On hand—Kid gloves at parties.

☞ Jones thought a little more affection at home might secure more palatable dinners, and in the evening he addressed Mrs. J. in an endearing tone as "sweetest." She took it quietly, merely asking who the *others* were.

☞ Says the Boston Courier: An amusing typographical error was discovered in the proof of an article in our musical column last week. A piece of music, "As the Hart Pants," was made to read "As the Hair Parts," which was a barber-ous transmutation.

☞ A New London ox is developing a horn from his back.

☞ AN OUTSPOKEN PHYSICIAN.—A Brooklyn physician, gifted with a faculty for outspoken talk and plain English, reported the death of a patient as from "dyspepsia, caused by taking quack medicines for two years." Doubtless there was more truth in this than in half the long Latin obfuscations commonly made use of.

☞ A fashionable lady lately dropped one of her eyebrows in the church pew, and dreadfully frightened a young man sitting next to her who thought it was his moustache.

MY QUEEN.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY WARE.

Yes, she walked a queen. I see her now as she looked to me in the far long syne, beauty in her every outline, grace in her every movement. Splendid she looked, but dangerous. I was afraid of her, yet I was fascinated by her; contrary forces, mingled attraction and repulsion, seemed acting upon me when in her presence. I did not stop to ask myself the origin of these opposing forces. I now think the repulsion was in my own unconscious self; the attraction was in her own powerful will.

I did not often seek her, yet we were frequently thrown together, apparently without design on her part. We roamed together over many noble fields of thought that were common ground to us. I now began to relish and to seek her society for the mental stimulus it afforded. We were wont to view great truths from opposing standing points, and to maintain with wordy warfare the correctness of those contrasting views, yet never a shade of anger entered into the contest. Gradually the spell of her enchantment was woven about me. I sought her now from habit, from inclination. Did I love her?

It was done! the rash words were spoken that in honor bound me to her, and—I was miserable.

One hour of intoxication in the weird spell of her beauty under the continued influence of moonlight, the sea-shore and distant music mingling with the plashing of the waves, had moved upon my impulsive nature as it never before had been wrought upon by spell of woman. I had madly told her that I loved her. I was not insincere. For the moment I believed it. I had asked her to be my wife, and she had promised me—a promise that was sealed with a mutual kiss.

Now alone, by sober daylight, in the quiet and peace of my own room, I knew that I did not love her. Nay, I shrank from her. But there was no retracing the step I had taken. So I began to look to the future. She would make me a magnificent wife. How proudly she would adorn my home. It would be the palace of a queen. Would it be the home of my heart?

I doubted her, noble as were her conceptions of the great moral truths of life. Yet she had confessed to me with tender feminine blushes that she loved me, that she had *ever* loved *me*, and *only* me. Why must I doubt her? Why was I not happy? Yes, why was I not overwhelmed with happiness? I was a wretch for being discontented, dissatisfied, unhappy.

Why was I miserable away from my enchantress if I did not love her? No other fair one ever had claims upon me.

And if I *did* love her, why did my heart peer into the future with a reluctance that amounted to a sickening dread? I began to think it was because of the natural discontent inherent to humanity, the proneness to undervalue whatsoever we possess, and continually to sigh after the unattained. Should she cease to love me, should she love another, would it make me wretched? I could not tell. I would have been willing to know by actual experiment. How was it that I could think with pleasure of such a possibility? I was thoroughly displeased with myself. I was thoroughly miserable without any apparent cause.

One glance of the eye revealed it to me. Now I know what years without meeting her would not have told me. Without meeting *her*, not my queenly rose, no, but the pure, the lovely water-lily. Now I knew that only the water-lily could have made me happy, and she was lost to me forever. Had I not marked the rose for mine? Nay, a few brief days more, and should I not wear that rose upon my heart? Now I knew why I had been wretched. Now I knew the water-lily was the one I should have chosen.

Oh, mystery of existence! If there be one who, above all others, should be my mate, one who alone is my counterpart, why do these puzzling, blinding workings of circumstance separate us forever? Or, being separated, why cannot we remain forever in blest unconsciousness of the irreparable misfortune?

The day dawned—the day that was to rivet upon me those chains which death alone should break. Like a criminal awaking on the morn of his execution, I opened my eyes to a consciousness of dumb, hideous, unavoidable misery. I wished the slowly lagging hours might stay their onward course suddenly and forever. I walked and talked like an automaton.

Later in the day, when my rose appeared, I was warmed into a negative intensity of life, warmed by her fascinating eye, warmed by her more than regal beauty. As my senses drank in the intoxication of her outward loveliness my higher nature forgot its instincts, forgot its very existence. Ah, my queenly blossom was glorious upon this day of days. All the wondrous grace of a magnificently developed womanhood was made more wondrously charming by every aid which a perfect toilet could render. What mortal could be near her, and behold unmoved that rare combination of beauty, richness, taste, which my rose displayed?

Had I then forgotten the fragrant water-lily? It was treason to think of her. It was duty to forget her. And I strove manfully to do my duty.

I must enlarge upon the events of this day. The few eras in our lives merit more thought, more attraction, than the long lapses of ordinary time that intervene.

And I must, also, tell something of myself. I was twenty-seven. I possessed a pleasing person, a liberal education, and an ample fortune. I had no near relatives. My parents had died of a malignant fever within a few days of each other. Since that time, a period of more than three years, I had been master of my own actions. One of the first things which I had done after coming into full possession of my patrimony was to invest the bulk of it in "The Aureus."

The Aureus was a famous silver mine in Nevada. Its flaming pamphlets and prospectus had extolled extravagantly the richness of its claims. My faith in the Aureus was unbounded. That the sage brush and horned toads of Nevada flourished above mines of untold wealth was certain. And that the Aureus was one of the very richest of those mines appeared undeniable from the glowing representations that had been made to me by the company with whom I had invested. Hitherto there had been immense outlays, and no returns. I was led to expect that soon there would be immense returns and no new outlays. I fully believed this, and had no concern for the safety of my fortune. I felt sure that I should in a very few years be made a millionaire. I was not over anxious for this, but the prospect of possessing a superabundance of wealth is by no means especially disheartening to any human being—and I was human.

My rose had budded and blossomed upon an old aristocratic stock. Her family tree was in its decadence. She would never do for a poor man's wife, with her luxurious habits and refined tastes. To shine in courts and palaces seemed the very thing for which she was created.

Accustomed to wealth myself, I had never for a moment thought that my fortune rather than my person had been the good thing which my rose desired to possess. This idea, for the first time, suddenly presented itself to me on this eventful day, when, two hours before the ceremony was to be performed, I brought her a case of diamond jewelry with setting of Etruscan gold. I had made her many rich presents since our betrothal, and this one was unexpected. The set was peculiar for the richness of the stones, as well as for the unique beauty of the setting, and I was sure it would give her a pleasant surprise. When she took the gift and perceived its value a flash of greedy gladness shone for an instant in her eye, striking me unpleasantly. The next moment the look was supplanted by one of well-feigned affectionate gratitude as she said, "It is a present fit for a queen."

"And my queen, of all queens in the world, is most meet to receive it," was my reply.

Two hours later my groomsman, Frank Laroche was sitting with me in the chamber adjoining a suite of rooms occupied by the bride and her maids within her father's old and substantial family mansion, the principal relic of more prosperous days. A brilliant party of wedding-guests was assembled below. The hour for the marriage had arrived. Frank and I were sitting during that uncomfortable restless interval which usually precedes such important events, when all concerned seem waiting for something, no one can tell what. I was looking toward the door by which my bride and her maids should enter, momentarily expecting them to appear.

"Oh!" cried Frank, casting his eyes carelessly over the columns of a daily that lay half unfolded upon the table beside him, "Oh, here is news from the Aureus!" His eyes brightened with interest. "That is the concern in which you invested so largely, is it not, my dear boy?"

"Yes; please read it aloud. Let us hear if my fortune is made."

Frank read the article. The Aureus had failed! After all the expense of erecting mills, and running them, it was found that the claims were too poor to pay even the expense of working. In addition to this, the agent had absconded, leaving the company burdened with immense debts that must be paid by the stockholders. I was financially ruined!

This was a hard blow, and was dealt to me by fate in a critical time. I could have borne it alone without a murmur. But this proud woman, whom I was about to marry, could *she* submit to pinching poverty?

I looked around upon this room in the family mansion. A certain something in its furnishings, a something which I had seen in parlor and drawing-room, but which I had not before thought of, told me plainly that already poverty had stealthily entered this house by the back door, had hidden its unwelcome self in pantry, in press, in cupboard, in bed-chamber, and was daily, hourly threatening to take forcible possession of the whole dwelling.

Frank's eye followed mine. His prescient soul comprehended my thoughts before I gave them utterance in the words, "*She* is threatened with beggary. Do you suppose she has read that article? If she knew what it contains, would she marry me?"

Frank shook his head dubiously. "It is too late, is it not, to retreat now? The guests are all here. The hour has come. The bride, I suppose, is ready. The minister is in waiting. Why, at this very moment they are holding their breath and standing on tiptoe below to see the bridal party enter."

"But, Frank, it is *never* too late until the ceremony has actually taken place. I am in honor bound to tell her that I am a poor man; to tell her that, if she desires it, she is free."

"You are in honor bound to no such thing. This paper has probably been in the house since morning. No doubt she has read it. There has been ample time. Hark! I hear a rustle! The bride is coming with her maids!"

But the bride did not come with her maids! We sat and sat, Frank and I, in this upper chamber, waiting and waiting. A ripple of sound from the crowded rooms below reached us; then we could perceive a hush. Then we heard a faint echo of one manly voice, the voice of the minister, as if uttering the words of the marriage service! Our eyes opened upon each other wide in blank astonishment. We listened a little longer to be sure our ears had not deceived us; then, acting from a simultaneous impulse, we started with quick but silent tread for the front hall. We went half-way down the stairway, whence we could see into the parlor. And what did we behold? A bridal party standing before the man of God, who was uttering these solemn words, "I pronounce you man and wife in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen!"

The "man and wife," the central figures of the group, were my queenly rose and a well-known fop, the contemptible and dissipated son of the richest man in the county! And my rose wore in her fairy-like ears and upon her incomparable bosom a set of flashing diamonds in unique setting of Etruscan gold, my gift of two hours ago!

The ceremony was ended. The hush of silence was broken as well by expressions of surprise as by congratulations of joy. Evidently another bridegroom had been expected by the guests. The bride was radiant, and bore herself with perfect regal self-possession. The bridegroom was tipsy and insipid.

We stayed to see and hear no more. I took Frank's arm. We strode down the stairs to the outer door through the wondering throng of gay people who choked the entrance-way. Out into the gray gloom of the fog-filled street we went. We traversed several blocks before either of us spoke. Frank seemed choking with indignation. I was whelmed in a whirlpool of varying emotions, the strongest element of which was the thought, "I am free! I am free!"

"Disgraceful! outrageous! the most shameful trick I ever saw played upon a man!" exclaimed Frank when at length he found breath to speak.

"Hail, blessed Poverty!" was my quick response. "Thou hast shown me the hollow-heartedness of that false, deceitful woman! Thou hast set me free! I thank thee for it!"

Five years have passed. Out of the shades of poverty I have emerged into the brighter light of prosperity.

Before the death of my parents I had studied medicine, had passed through the required course with honor, and had obtained my diploma; but I had never given myself to the practice of my chosen profession. After the collapse of the Aureus I applied myself to the calling with a devotion which brought me success, and success has brought me wealth.

Of late a wonderfully rich lode has been opened in the once abandoned "diggings" of the Aureus. Already the returns have commenced flowing into my treasury with highly gratifying frequency. There is even a probability that I may yet become a millionaire.

The rose flourished for a time in the rich man's garden. She had silks, satins, plate, jewels (in addition to those I had given her), she had a palatial mansion, fine horses, sumptuous carriages, and servants in livery. She had a husband who occasionally beat her, and turned her out of doors, but she always continued to return, and she never appeared otherwise than proud of the position which her husband's property gave her. But debts and dissipation have scattered the princely wealth of which she was so proud. To-day the faded rose subsists miserably upon charity.

And the water lily? Ah, the pure, the true-hearted water lily! I have sought, I have won her! She rests upon my heart. She is my true wealth, my priceless fortune which no power but Death can wrest from me. Her love is the crowning glory of my life.

NEWS OF THE WEEK.

ADDRESS BY THE UNITED STATES CENTENNIAL COMMISSION.—Mr. Joseph R. Hawley, President of the Centennial Commission, has issued the following address to the people of the United States:

To the people of the United States:—The Congress of the United States has enacted that the completion of the One Hundredth Year of American Independence shall be celebrated by an International Exhibition of the Arts, Manufactures and Products of the soil and mine, to be held in Philadelphia in 1876, and has appointed a Commission, consisting of representatives from each State and Territory, to conduct the celebration.

Originating under the auspices of the National Legislature, controlled by a National Commission, and designed as it is to "commemorate the first century of our existence, by an Exhibition of the National resources of the country and their development, and of our progress in those Arts which benefit mankind, in comparison with those of old Nations," it is to the people at large that the Commission look for the aid which is necessary to make the Centennial Celebration the grandest anniversary the world has ever seen.

That the completion of the first century of our existence should be marked by some imposing demonstration is, we believe, the patriotic wish of the people of the whole country. The Congress of the United States has wisely decided that the Birthday of the Great Republic can be most fittingly celebrated by the universal collection and display of all the trophies of its progress. It is designed to bring together, within a building covering fifty acres, not only the varied productions of our mines and of the soil, but types of all the intellectual triumphs of our citizens, specimens of everything that America can furnish, whether from the brains or the hands of her children, and thus make evident to the world the advancement of which a self-governed people is capable.

In this "Celebration" all nations will be invited to participate; its character being international. Europe will display her arts and manufactures, India her curious fabrics, while newly opened China and Japan will lay bare the treasures which for centuries their ingenious people have been perfecting. Each land will compete in generous rivalry for the palm of superior excellence.

To this grand gathering every zone will contribute its fruits and cereals. No mineral shall be wanting; for what the East lacks the West will supply. Under one roof will the South display in rich luxuriance her growing cotton, and the North, in miniature, the ceaseless machinery of her mills, converting that cotton into cloth. Each section of the globe will send its best offerings to this exhibition, and each State of the Union, as a member of one united body politic, will show to her sister States and to the world how much she can add to the greatness of the nation of which she is a harmonious part.

To make the Centennial Celebration such a success as the patriotism and the pride of every American demands, will require the co-operation of the people of the whole country. The United States Centennial Commission has received no Government aid, such as England extended to her World's Fair, and France to her Universal Exposition, yet the labor and responsibility imposed upon the Commission is as great as in either of those undertakings. It is estimated that ten millions of dollars will be required, and this sum Congress has provided shall be raised by stock subscription, and that the people shall have the opportunity of subscribing in proportion to the population of their respective States and Territories.

The Commission looks to the unfailing patriotism of the people of every section, to see that each contributes its share to the expenses, and receives its share of the benefits of an enterprise in which all are so deeply interested. It would further earnestly urge the formation in each State and Territory of a centennial organization, which shall in time see that county associations are formed, so that when the nations are gathered together in 1876 each Commonwealth can view with pride the contributions she has made to the national glory.

Confidently relying on the zeal and patriotism ever displayed by our people in every national undertaking, we pledge and prophesy that the Centennial Celebration will worthily show how greatness, wealth, and intelligence can be fostered by such institutions as those which have for one hundred years blessed the people of the United States.

THE BOSTON FIRE.—Boston is rapidly recovering from the effects of the great fire. Preparations have begun for a resumption of business and the re-erection of stores and warehouses. The Boston Insurance Companies will pay from 20 to 100 per cent. of their losses. There is no feeling of despondency in business circles, and no crisis is feared. It is stated that thirty lives are known to be lost by the calamity, and that nearly 10,000 poor sewing-girls are thrown out of employment.

On the 13th of November a meeting of citizens was held, Mayor Gaston presiding, at which resolutions were adopted favoring the reconstruction of the streets in the burnt district on a better plan; prohibiting Mansard roofs; favoring the erection of a Merchants' Exchange in a central location; the calling of an extra session of the Legislature, to authorize the issue of building bonds; an application to the General Government for an extension of the post-office building; and an act of Congress allowing drawbacks on building materials. The Relief Committee earnestly protested against the issue of any additional currency by the Secretary of the Treasury, in view of the calamity, as unwise and unnecessary. A New York dispatch says it is estimated that 250,000 sides of leather and 30,000,000 pounds of wool and woollens were destroyed by the Boston fire. The price of leather has risen from 3 to 10 per cent., and of wools 10 per cent. in consequence. The total number of business houses and firms burnt out is stated at 930; dwelling and lodging-houses, 60. Among the buildings and offices burned out were those of 21 banks, 46 insurance companies and 27 newspapers. It is estimated that 300 families are homeless. The total loss is variously estimated by the Boston papers at from $80,000,000 to $100,000,000. Private dispatches state that it will be about $75,000,000. The Citizens' Relief Committee return thanks to their fellow-citizens in all parts of the Union for the sympathy extended, and accept the offers of pecuniary aid.

THE ELECTIONS.—Official returns of the election in Kansas show a Republican majority of 33,700. The Legislature stands 119 Republicans to 14 Democrats.

General Grant's majority in California is now reported at 11,300.

Full returns of the election in Maryland give Greeley 1064 majority.

Returns from 112 counties in Missouri give Greeley 25,640 majority. Colonel Hay, Republican, is defeated in the Fifth Congressional District, which leaves the delegation 9 Democrats to 4 Republicans.

Full returns of the election in New Hampshire, excepting Wentworth Station—"where there was probably no election"—show that Grant received 37,236 votes, and Greeley 31 495. Scattering, 302. Grant's plurality, 5741; majority over Greeley, 5439.

The counting of votes in Orleans Parish, Louisiana, is not concluded. Thus far 29,054 votes have been counted, giving Greeley a net majority of 9820. The matter of the removal of several members of the Board of Return by Governor Warmouth is before the courts.

The returns of the election in Texas are very meagre, but that State is conceded to Greeley by 20,000 majority. The Democrats claim all but one of the Congressional districts, a majority of the State Senate and two-thirds of the House.

Returns from all the counties in Illinois, official and unofficial, show a majority of 55,954 for Grant. Oglesby, for Governor, runs behind Grant about 10,000. The Republicans carry 12, and the Democrats 7 Congressional districts. The Republicans claim 37 majority in the Legislature on joint ballot.

The latest returns from Tennessee give Greeley 17,000 majority, and re-elect Brown (Democrat) Governor, by from 3000 to 5000 majority.

Ninety-seven counties in Georgia give Greeley 11,436 majority.

Official returns from 101 counties and towns in Virginia give Greeley 508 majority. Unofficial returns from 7 other counties give Grant 2088 majority. Grant's majority in the State is estimated at 2000.

THE HORSE DISEASE.—The horse disease in this and other cities has taken a new turn; the animals that were overworked or that had little or no discharge from the nostrils being liable to a dropsy, which is generally symptomatic of a fatal termination. In this city a number of horses are known to be dying, but it is impossible at present to obtain any returns of the mortality. In Washington, where the disease has prevailed for two weeks, there is no abatement yet, and no street cars have been run lately. The dropsical stage of the disease has been reached in that city, and yesterday thirteen deaths have been reported. In New York and Brooklyn the animals so affected are beginning to drop dead in the streets, and a post-mortem examination shows that "their lungs are eaten away." The "horse dropsy" has also begun to affect the animals in Raleigh, N. C., that were previously affected by the influenza. The horse influenza is steadily increasing throughout the West.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

☞ Whaling grounds—School-houses.

☞ When is a lady like a show window? When she takes great panes with her sash.

☞ A sealed proposal—The engagement kiss.

☞ Guilt frames—Prison windows.

☞ A huckster in Stamford, Kentucky, has the following warning displayed over his stall, "Any Man or Boy that takes One Apel Without Leafe is a litl Hogo in his harto."

☞ Cool. A butcher killed his neighbor grocery-man's favorite cat, the other day, and soon after sent to borrow his sausage-cutting machine.

☞ An Indiana poet has been sent to the penitentiary for three years for what a Western paper calls "plagiarizing a horse."

☞ A meddlesome man, who was watching his wife bake pies Saturday, stepped with his bare feet on a warm stove lid, and then stepped up in the air a few paces, and has now gone West.

☞ A farmer brought his milk into town during the epizooty, by harnessing his two sons to a light wagon.

☞ "Sam Funk" is the name of the editor of the new Chinese paper at San Francisco, called the Chin-Jab Chin.

☞ The orders at the Colt Manufacturing Company's works at Hartford have increased since the appearance of the horse disease.

☞ A matrimonial Terre Hautentot is looking around for a sixth wife. He "generally takes them as has grown-up sons with a trade."

☞ The barber that shaved me last, once shaved a dead man; the dead man raised up deliberately, and said, "My friend, won't you please shave me with the back of the razor? I can't stand that," and laid down again, deader than ever.

☞ There is a town out West called Random. A resident of the place being asked where he lived said "he lived at Random." He was taken up as a vagrant.

☞ A little boy out West lately achieved great success in the parts of David and Goliah, both together. He was swinging a sling about his head when it hit him under the ear, killing him instantly.

☞ Brigham Young has dyed his beard and adopted other vanities.

☞ The race of oil princes who wear diamonds as large as hen's eggs, and go barefoot, is fast becoming extinct.—*Titusville Press.*

☞ A young lady at Saratoga, last Summer, attracted a great deal of attention by excusing herself and retiring at precisely nine o'clock every evening. The reason for this conduct was much sought after, and it was finally discovered that at that hour she was obliged to relieve her maid, who was obliged to be always in the room during her mistress's absence to mount guard over her diamonds.

☞ Alligators are so thick around Richland county, South Carolina, that they trip up horses in the streets and then extend their jaws in a genial smile.

☞ Eighty-two mummified Chinamen were lately shipped from Sacramento to the Celestial land.

☞ A Danbury woman, called up to attend the bed-side of a dying friend, was deprived of the melancholy pleasure by the delay occasioned in borrowing a breast-pin suitable for the occasion.

☞ An exchange says a boy in Illinois was recently choked to death by a kernel of corn. A nearly similar affair happened during the war, when a raw recruit was choked to death by a colonel of militia.—*Norristown Herald.*

☞ A Providence politician has sued a fellow-citizen for damages to the amount of $130, because a minor son of the said fellow-citizen wickedly and maliciously set fire to some fire-works protruding from the coat pocket of the politician aforesaid as he was marching in a torchlight procession.

☞ Over a thousand young American girls are at school in France and Italy.

☞ The people on the Texan frontier, having been robbed by savages for a number of years, the Government has appointed Messrs. Thomas P. Robb and Richard H. Savage a commission to fix up the border question. *Similia similibus curantur.*

☞ "That's unjust," exclaimed a traveller, when informed by the conductor of a railroad train that the price of passage had been recently doubled. "True," replied the urbane official, as he took the passenger's cash; "it is hard, but then it is *fare*."

☞ A Detroit politician, who was a candidate for office at the late election, is about to publish a book containing a list of the various propositions that were made to him during his time of candidature.

☞ The St. Louis Times describes the love existing between a young shoemaker and the object of his affections as a case of "two soles with but a single upper."

☞ The Danbury News says that a committee appointed to canvass Rhode Island has sent for the tent of the Danbury Agricultural Society.

☞ Paris has a new sensation in the acrobatic line. A man at the Folies Bergeres, with abnormally developed wrists, hangs by the feet from a trapeze and then lifts up by his hands a live horse.

☞ A Springfield, Mass., sexton innocently rang the first church bell an hour ahead of time. In surprise, clocks were put forward and certain lovely forms astonished themselves and their neighbors by being in at the beginning of the service. Three hundred and forty-seven applications for the sexton, with increased pay, have been made by ministers in various parts of New England.

☞ The following is the most startling compositor's "line to fill out a column" we have seen for a month:—"Does not a young mother's heart leap for joy when she beholds her darling babe's 1st 2th 3th?"

☞ At a recent funeral in Georgetown, Cal., one of the mourners fainted and fell into the open grave, and died in a few minutes after he was extricated.

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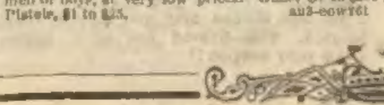

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WIT AND HUMOR.

"BULLY OLD ARKANSAS."

BY MARK TWAIN.

There were two men in the company who caused me particular discomfort. One was a little Swede, about twenty-five years old, who knew only one song, and he was forever singing it. By day we were all crowded into one small, stifling bar-room, and so there was no escaping this young person's music. Through all the profanity, whisky guzzling, "old sledge," and quarrelling, his monotonous song meandered with never a variation in its tiresome sameness, and it seemed to me at last that I would be content to die in order to be rid of the torture.

The other man was a stalwart ruffian called "Arkansas," who carried two revolvers in his belt and a bowie-knife projecting from his boot, and who was always drunk and always suffering for a fight. But he was so feared that nobody would accommodate him. He would try all manner of little wary ruses to entrap somebody into an offensive remark, and his face would light up now and then when he fancied he was fairly on the scent for a fight, but invariably his victim would elude his toils, and then he would show a disappointment that was almost pathetic. The landlord, Johnson, was a meek, well-meaning fellow, and Arkansas fastened on him early as a promising subject, and gave him no rest day or night for awhile. On the fourth morning Arkansas got drunk, and sat himself down to wait for an opportunity. Presently Johnson came in, just comfortably sociable with whisky, and said—

"I reckon the Pennsylvania 'lection—"

Arkansas raised his finger impressively, and Johnson stopped. Arkansas rose unsteadily and confronted him. Said he—

"Wha—what do you know about Pennsylvania? Answer me that. Wha' do you know 'bout Pennsylvania?"

"I was only going to say—"

"You was only goin' to say—you was—you was only goin' to say—what was you goin' to say? That's it! That's what I want to know. I want to know wha—what you (hic) what y'u know about Pennsylvania, since you're making yourself so infernal free. Answer me that?"

"Mr. Arkansas, if you'd only let me—"

"Who's a henderin' you? Don't you insinuate nothing agin me!—don't you do it. Don't you come in here bullyin' around, and cussin' and goin' on like a lunatic—don't you do it.' Coz I won't stand it. If fight's what you want, out with it! I'm your man, out with it."

Said Johnson, backing into a corner, while Arkansas followed menacingly—

"Why, I never said nothing, Mr. Arkansas. You don't give a man no chance. I was only going to say that Pennsylvania was going to have an election next week—that was all—that was everything I was going to say—I wish I may never stir if it warn't."

"Well, then, why didn't you say it? What did you come swellin' around that way for, and trying to raise trouble?"

"Why, I didn't come swellin' around, Mr. Arkansas—I just—"

"I'm a liar am I! Ger—reat Cæsar's ghost—"

"Oh, please, Mr. Arkansas, I never meant such a thing as that; I wish I may die if I did. All the boys will tell you that I always spoke well of you, and respected you more'n any man in the house. Ask Smith. Ain't it so, Smith? Didn't I say, no longer ago than last night, that for a man that was a gentleman all the time and every way you took him, give me Arkansas? I'll leave it to any gentleman here if them warn't the very words I used. Come, Mr. Arkansas, le's take a drink—le's shake hands and take a drink. Come up—everybody. It's my treat. Come up, Bill, Tom, Bob, Scotty—come up. I want you all to take a drink with me and Arkansas—old Arkansas I call him—bully old Arkansas. Gimme your hand agin. Look at him, boys—just look at him. Thar stands the whitest man in America!—and the man that denies it has got to fight me, that's all. Gimme that old flipper again!"

They embraced, with drunken affection on the landlord's part, and unresponsive toleration on the part of Arkansas, who, bribed by a drink, was disappointed of his prey once more. But the foolish landlord was so happy to have escaped butchery, that he went on talking when he ought to have marched himself out of danger. The consequence was that Arkansas began to glower upon him dangerously, and presently said—

"Lan'lord, will you p-please make that remark over again if you please?"

"I was a sayin' to Scotty that my father was upward of eighty year old when he died."

"Was that all you said?"

"Yes, that was all."

"Didn't say nothing but that?"

"No, nothing."

Then an uncomfortable silence.

Arkansas played with his glasses a moment, lolling on his elbows on the counter. Then he meditatively scratched his left shin with his right boot, while the awkward silence continued. But presently he loafed away toward the stove, looking dissatisfied, roughly shouldered two or three men out of a comfortable position, occupied it himself; gave a sleeping dog a kick that sent him howling under a bench, then spread his long legs and his blanket coat tails apart, and proceeded to warm his back. In a little while he fell to grumbling to himself, and soon he slouched back to the bar and said—

"Lan'lord, what's your idea for rakin' up old personalities and blowin' about your father! Ain't this company agreeable to you? If this company ain't agreeable to you, p'r'aps we'd better leave. Is that your idea? Is that what you are coming at?"

"Why, bless your soul, Arkansas, I warn't thinking of such a thing. My father and my mother—"

"Lan'lord, don't crowd a man! Don't do it. If nothing'll do you but a disturbance, out with it like a man, (hic) but don't rake up old bygones and fling 'em in the teeth of a passal of people that wants to be peaceable if they could get a chance. What's the matter with you this mornin', any way? I never see a man carry on so."

"Arkansas, I reely didn't mean no harm, and I won't go on with it if it's unpleasant to you; I reckon my licker's got into my head, and what with the flood, and havin' so many to feed and look out for—"

"So that's what's a ranklin' in your heart, is it? You want us to leave, do you? There's too many of us. You want us to pack up and swim. Is that it? Come!"

"Please be reasonable, Arkansas. Now, you know that I ain't the man to—"

"Are you a threatenin' me? Are you? By George, the man don't live that can skeer me! Don't you try to come that game, my chicken, 'cuz I can stand a good deal, but I won't stand that. Come out from behind that bar till I clean you! You want to drive us out, do you, you sneakin', under handed hound! Come out from behind that bar! I'll learn you to bully and badger and browbeat a gentleman that's forever trying to befriend you and keep you out of trouble!"

"Please, Arkansas, don't shoot. If there's got to be bloodshed—"

"Do you hear that, gentlemen? Do you hear him talk about bloodshed? So it's blood you want, is it, you ravin' desperado! You'd made up your mind to murder somebody this morning'—I knowed it perfectly well. I'm the man, am I? It's me you're goin' to murder, is it! But you can't do it 'thout I get one chance first, you thievin' black-hearted, white-livered son of a nigger? Draw your weepon!"

With that Arkansas began to shoot, and the landlord to clamber over benches, men, and every sort of obstacle in a frantic desire to escape. In the midst of the wild hubbub the landlord crashed through a glass-door, and as Arkansas charged after him, the landlord's wife suddenly appeared in the doorway and confronted the desperado with a pair of scissors! Her fury was magnificent. With head erect and flashing eye she stood a moment and then advanced with her weapon. The astonished ruffian hesitated, and then fell back a step. She followed. She backed him step by step into the middle of the bar-room, and then, while the wondering crowd closed up and gazed, she gave him such another tongue-lashing as never a cowed and shame-faced braggart got before, perhaps. As she finished and retired victorious, a roar of applause shook the house, and every man ordered "drinks for the crowd" in one and the same breath.

The lesson was entirely sufficient. The reign of terror was over, and the Arkansas domination broken for good. During the rest of the season of island captivity, there was one man who sat apart in a state of permanent humiliation, never mixing in any quarrel or uttering a boast, and never resenting the insults the once cringing crew now constantly levelled at him, and that man was "Arkansas."

LA MARGUERITE.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST,

BY MAURICE F. EGAN.

Margaret Bellisle stood at the window, looking out upon the wet foliage in the garden. The Autumn rain fell with a dreary drip, beating the fallen petals of the chrysanthemums into the dank earth.

The room in which she stood was poor and badly-furnished, yet signs of refined taste were visible. Margaret herself was beautiful. Her beauty lay not so much in the regularity of her features as in their expression. Her face was pale and sad, and those deep blue eyes, now filled with dreamy sadness, would at times flash or sparkle, transfiguring her countenance.

Her father—a thin, nervous-looking old man—sat near the fire, pretending to read, but eyeing her uneasily.

"Well," he said, querulously, "you have heard what Mr. Almayne had to say—now speak."

Margaret seemed not to hear him.

"Don't you hear, Margaret? Mr. Almayne said that John Sherwood has married a South American lady, and Almayne ought to know, for he has just come from Lima."

"I hear, father," responded the girl in a stifled voice, as if she were suppressing a rising sob.

Old Bellisle fidgeted with the leaves of his book.

"Of course, Margaret, that ends your engagement with John Sherwood. I knew he wasn't to be trusted. Two years ago when he asked for you he was a poor clerk. 'Make some money,' said I, 'and you shall have her,' and so he went to Lima for the firm of Almayne & Co. 'But remember,' said I, 'there's to be no corresponding or nonsense of that sort between you and her. When you bring the cash, we'll close the bargain.' I saw through the fellow." And old Mr. Bellisle chuckled by way of congratulating himself on his own prudence.

Margaret went slowly up to her room. At that time existence seemed a weight almost too heavy to bear. A bright star had fallen from her life. Mr. Almayne had just reached home from South America, bringing the news of John Sherwood's faithlessness.

"I have loved, I have waited," groaned Margaret, "and both loving and waiting have failed."

Taking a dainty box—the repository of her choicest treasures—she drew from it John Sherwood's only gift—a withered daisy that had once been pink and white, and two long years ago had bathed in Spring sunshine. Around it was wrapped a paper, on which was written by a hand she loved well, the line—

"Si douce est la Marguerite."

"Ah," sighed Margaret bitterly, "if he thought me so sweet, why did he cast me aside? I will burn the words and the flowers, and tear all care for their donor from my heart. But no, I will send them back to him, and they, rejected, will tell him that Margaret Bellisle scorns a traitor!"

With flushed cheeks Margaret placed the poor little flower in an envelope, and directing it to Mr. John Sherwood, care of Señor Calmo, Lima, dropped it into the post.

Returning home, she saw at once from her father's excited manner that something unusual had happened.

"Daisy," he called out, "Mr. Almayne wants to marry you!"

Margaret was silent from surprise. Mr. Bellisle took her silence for disapproval.

"Beggars can't be choosers," he broke out, roughly. "Now that Sherwood has thrown you on my hands, I don't know what's going to become of us. I'm an invalid, and we're getting poorer every day. Your teaching don't amount to much."

Poverty had not improved Mr. Bellisle. It had made him selfish and unfeeling. Before he ruined himself by speculation, he had been diametrically otherwise.

"Almayne sent me a note requesting permission to ask you to be his wife. I have dispatched my answer, which was in the affirmative, telling him to call to-morrow."

"Very well," returned Margaret, "I will marry him—the sooner it is over the better."

Her father looked up in astonishment.

"By George!" he muttered, "that's cool. I expected thunder, lightning, tears, hysterics; but there's no use in trying to understand women."

The next day Mr. Almayne called, and was accepted. He begged that the wedding-day might be soon—within two weeks, and Margaret assented.

The morning of the marriage came. The bridal party started from Mr. Bellisle's residence. The bridegroom was faultless in attire and manner, but a physiognomist, looking at his fair, placid face and those sharp, light eyes, would have framed the words, "false and sensual."

Margaret was very pale beneath her veil and orange-flowers, but in her breast she carried a throbbing, anxious heart.

On the same morning a young man, bronzed by the Southern sun, sprang eagerly up the steps of Mr. Bellisle's house. He rang the bell loudly several times, but in vain. No one answered it. A lady *happened* to be gazing through the half-open shutters of the next house. He applied to her.

"They have gone—you are too late," she answered.

"How? Does Mr. Bellisle and his daughter, Miss Margaret, no longer live here?"

"By this time Miss Margaret Bellisle is no more," answered the neighbor smiling.

"Dead? That cannot be!" cried John Sherwood, starting back.

"No—married. I took you for one of the guests. They just started for the church in Laurent street. Mr. Almayne, a wealthy young merchant, is the happy man."

Hastily thanking his informant, John Sherwood hastened toward the church. People thought him mad. He rushed along, careless of obstacles. Dodging under horses' heads, and nearly overturning an apple-vender and his stand, he went on, with the one thought in his mind—to save Margaret from Richard Almayne.

He reached the church. The bride and groom stood at the altar rails. The clergyman was preparing to begin the ceremony.

Striding up the aisle, John Sherwood called out:

"I forbid this marriage!"

Almayne looked up in astonishment. His eyes met the angry gaze of John Sherwood, and he turned away in confusion. Margaret colored at the sight of the man she loved; but, after a short struggle, she advanced, asking calmly:

"By what right?"

"By the right you gave me when you promised to be my wife!" John Sherwood cried, impetuously.

"Nonsense! Nonsense, young man!" said Margaret's father. "This behavior is foolish—ridiculous. Didn't you give up *your* claim when you married another woman? I don't put any confidence in you, sir. I believe you're a Morman."

At another time Sherwood would have laughed; now he was bewildered.

"*I* marry another? What do you mean?"

"Oh, you're very innocent!" pursued old Bellisle, "but there's Mr. Almayne. *He* knows all about it."

"And did he say that?" cried Sherwood, glancing at Almayne, who shrunk back involuntarily. "He lied—you lied, Richard Almayne! You were my rival once, and you have basely lied to deprive me of *her* love! I see it all! Oh, Margaret—Margaret, was this why you sent me the withered daisy that brought me hither, anticipating some misfortune? Margaret, it is false! I have loved no other woman—I love you still."

Margaret glanced at Almayne. Then she stepped forward, and placed her right hand in John Sherwood's, saying:

"I believe you."

The clergyman had waited during the above dialogue. His presence suggested something to John Sherwood, who whispered a sentence to Margaret. The sentence was: "Let us be united, so that no man can part us."

Margaret blushed, and half-smiled. In a few minutes the two were made man and wife.

Richard Almayne stole silently from the place.

So far few clouds have darkened the married life of Mr. and Mrs. Sherwood. The daisy is John's favorite flower, and on his wife's wedding-ring, the old poet's words, "Si douce est la Marguerite," have been engraved.

Old Mr. Bellisle has become entirely reconciled to his daughter's choice, particularly as John Sherwood had made the beginning of a fortune in South America.

EVENINGS AT HOME.

As the evenings lengthen the question naturally arises, what shall be done with them? The question is felt oftener than it is asked. Perhaps it would be better were it asked oftener, and asked in a more intelligent way.

It is a startling fact that three-fourths of the crimes are committed in the night. All the vices nestle under the wings of the dark. The opportunities for undetected indulgence abound in the evening, and then temptations are most numerous and seductive. Most men are too busy in the day-time to drink or gamble, or indulge in other vices. They would shrink from being seen hanging about a bar, or lounging at the club, or playing euchre or whist for money, or talking with questionable characters. Their business reputation would be compromised were they to do by daylight what they do without hesitation by gaslight. And it is the evening indulgence that unfits for morning work, and finally breaks the credit, and destroys health, and demoralizes manhood. Three-fourths of the young people who go to ruin take the first steps on the downward path in the evening. We want no better key to a man's character than to know how he spends his nights.

The importance of making a wise and happy provision for the evening, is not appreciated as it should be by our people. Even those who have homes usually leave the evening to chance. They go to the theatre, the opera, or the lecture; or they stay at home hoping that somebody will drop in. If no one calls, the conversation tapers through all gradations of dulness into silence; the music drags and palls; the reading wearies; the whole family yawn and get half asleep before going to bed. And after a few experiences of this kind the husband finds livelier company and greater excitement at the saloon or club; the sons yield to more fascinating entertainment in questionable company; the daughters are either miserable at home or flitting in search of the happiness home ought to furnish but does not; and the poor wife and mother is either left to assuage her discontent or to mourn alone. And simply because nothing has been done to fill the evenings at home with delightful entertainment and recreative joy.

There is nothing so absurd as to imagine that a half-dozen people of different ages and tastes have only to be thrown together to be supremely contented and happy. And yet half our homes are managed on just this absurd principle; and people wonder that they are not happy, that so many men frequent the taverns, and so many youths and maidens are on the street, and every day some man or woman goes down into the abyss.

There is no breastwork against evil, and no school of virtue and moral worth like the good home. And the good home is not merely that which furnishes edible dinners and well-kept rooms and clean beds, but that which furnishes most satisfaction, refreshment and joy to its inmates. And evening is the only time when all the members of the family circle can meet together, and can mingle in happy and joyous intercourse. The occasion should be provided for as it usually is not. Our housekeepers should take the hint from those who furnish public entertainments, and lavish thought and ingenuity enough upon the occasion to make it so attractive and delightful and satisfying that every member of the household will feel the happier for it, and look forward to its return with expectancy, and be beyond the reach of the thousand temptations to spend the evening hours elsewhere.

Exactly how this is to be done must be answered by housekeepers for themselves. They have resources and ingenuity enough, will they but once see the importance of the thing, and set their wits at work to develop the hint into a beautiful and joyous reality. We do not mean that everybody should spend every evening at home. Let there be all profitable and entertaining going. Get all the delight and good that plays and concerts and lectures and parties can afford. Still it will be found that these great public entertainments often excite more than they delight or edify, and often indulged in produce weariness and a dissipation worse than fatigue. The evenings at home furnish the fitting alternate and contrast to these public entertainments, and each is enjoyed the more for the other. And to make evenings at home truly delightful, every resource of culture and art may be rightly invoked. Why not have a succession of evening entertainments, giving one to reading, another to music, a third to conversation, a fourth to a drama, and a fifth to miscellaneous plays? Why not import into the home circle some of the talent to amuse and entertain and edify which lies all about waiting for the invitation? And what one family cannot do alone two or three together can easily effect. Were our people to spend a tenth part of the time and interest and means they now throw away on worthless excitements and utter frivolities, in making their homes truly helpful and happy, we should prevent half the crimes, and stop half the vices of society at their source.—*Golden Age.*

Seeing a Sister's Apparition and then Hearing of Her Sudden Death.

[From the Providence Journal.]

A young lady from New York has been visiting relatives in this city during the past two weeks, and had made arrangements to return home last Friday night, having a strong impression upon her mind that she must go home without delay. For the sake of the company of a relative on her journey home, however, she was induced to postpone her departure until Monday evening last. On Sunday morning, after a quiet night's rest, she was suddenly awakened between 3 and 4 o'clock, and saw a figure distinctly, or was convinced she did, standing in her room, near the door, looking toward her. The figure bore an exact resemblance to a sister she left at home in New York in her usual health. The young lady got up and went toward the apparition, and it disappeared. She then opened a window and looked out, but seeing nothing more of the figure, or anything else unusual, she returned to her room and fell asleep again. In a short time she was awakened and saw the apparition of her sister again, with the same life-like appearance and in the same position as before. She got up again, and as she advanced toward it it receded from her approach, and disappeared as before. Again she looked about from room to room and out of the window, but saw nothing more of it. Being now too much excited to sleep longer, she dressed herself, and remained sitting up in her chamber waiting for daylight. Her uncle, who is an early riser, heard her moving about the room, and on his inquiring why she was up so early, she related her experience as stated above, and when the family had all risen it was the subject of general remark and comment. On Sunday noon the young lady received a dispatch from New York, informing her that her sister had died suddenly at the very hour the apparition appeared in her chamber.

GENTLE PATERNAL SATIRE.

IRATE PARENT—"Oh! yer don't want to go to a trade, don't yer! Oh! yer want to be a clerk in the Post-horfice, do yer! Post-horfice, indeed! Why, all *you're* fit for is to stand outside with your tongue hout, for people to wet their stamps against!"

Answers to Correspondents.

PAY YOUR POSTAGE.—Authors and others often send us letters and manuscripts not fully paid. In these cases the Department here enforces *double* rates on the deficiency—which we either have to pay, or to decline receiving the letters or manuscripts. Authors will also bear in mind that the Department now requires letter postage on all manuscripts—therefore it is often cheaper, as it is always safer, to send large packages by express.

E. L. R., (Goshen, N. Y.,) asks: "Why is a drinking glass called a tumbler?" Because it was formerly the custom to make these glasses with pointed bottoms, so that they could not stand, but would tumble if placed upright. These were the days when hard drinking was the rule, and by this expedient every one was forced to empty his glass before he could set it down. A drinking bout in that pleasant age generally ended by most of the drinkers themselves becoming tumblers.

GORD, S., (Cairo, Ill.,) writes: "I am a constant reader of the Post, and submit the following questions for your consideration: What color of kid gloves look best for a gentleman for winter wear? In the best society is it proper or customary for gentlemen to shake hands with a young lady when introduced to her?" Black, or any dark color, is suitable. If the lady wishes to shake hands she will express it by presenting her hand. Otherwise the gentleman should content himself with a bow in acknowledgment of the introduction.

CORALIE, (Woodside, Long Island,) writes: "I was wedded to the Post years ago, and have always loved my spouse too well to ever wish a divorce, and could not endure even a brief separation. I hate to trouble so good and wise a Post, but I don't know as much as I wish to, and so come to you to gain more knowledge and wisdom. 1st. Why are some adorned with freckles, while others are not? Does the difference lie in the blood or the skin, and is there no remedy, or prevention, except to shun the beautiful sunlight, and be smothered up under a veil, shutting out the soft kisses of the frolicsome breezes, which are so delicious, especially when one can get no other love kisses of any sort? 2d. What shall I do with my hair? I could cry over it, but crying won't help it. I am on the sunny side of thirty, but sorrow, sickness and suffering have turned my hair gray enough to match the frost on heads of fifty and sixty winters. I hate to hear people say, 'How very young she looks for a person with such gray hair.' I don't want to be old yet, so long before my time, and besides that, my hair was my pride and glory. It was of that rare color that was a marvel to every one that saw it, being of a dark brown, that looked black in the shade, and lighties up with rich golden bronze in the light, that would cause people to ask if I changed it at will from black to shimmering gold. No hair dye could give it that color, and if it could, it is so extremely thick and grows so rapidly, it would take a small fortune to dye it and keep it so. I cut it off, because its length and weight were so burdensome and my health so feeble, that physicians and others thought it sapped my life and strength. Some tell me to use Hiltz's hair dye, and others tell me to shave it close and wear false hair, since it is so fashionable. But where is the money to get it with? Echo answers, where?" We are sorry to learn that one of our numerous friends has been so unfortunate, and wish that we knew some medicine that would "minister to a mind diseased" sufficiently to restore the color of her hair. Not when trouble takes the place of age and turns the hair prematurely gray, there is nothing, so far known, that will restore its original color. With such hair as you describe, it must indeed be unpleasant to find it losing its vitality and turning gray. Yet even gray hair, in such abundance as you describe yours, is very attractive to many persons, and you had best reconcile yourself to the inevitable. As to using hair dye, or cutting off all your hair, we should not consider it advisable. You have one satisfaction, every year as you grow older will render your hair less peculiar. In regard to freckles, the difficulty is sometimes in the blood. In most cases it is probably confined to the skin, and may be affected by suitable washes. A liniment of lime water and oil, with a little ammonia, is said to be often beneficial. The Irish use buttermilk as a cosmetic with very good effect. Another good wash is made by scraping horseradish fine, and steeping it for several hours in buttermilk. It is then strained and used as a wash, night and morning. Beware of the cosmetics sold in the stores—they generally contain lead or other poisons.

A. E. R. writes: "Will you please let me know through the corre spondents' column what you think about the Royal Havana Lottery? Do you think they do the square and fair thing by persons holding tickets at a distance? Can you tell me where I can get a ticket, and what it will cost me? What do you think of my writing? Will it pass?" We think it, as we think all lotteries, an excellent place to put money in, but the poorest of all places to get money out of. Investing in lotteries is about as wise a transaction as planting thistles with the hope of reaping wheat. This Cuban lottery is an affair of the Spanish Government, and probably pays its losses, and certainly pockets its gains. We must decline giving any information that might lead you to throw away your money in such a quicksand. Your writing is very passable.

C. B. (Lancaster,) writes: "Finding so many interesting explanations on different topics, I have a question which I wish to ask you. Do you know of anything or way that will cause red to leave the face?" You are probably too full blooded, and might find it beneficial to put yourself on a low diet. Though you must watch, lest it injure your health.

A. J. S. writes: "Very often I read a piece where there is more or less spiritualism. Now, is there such a thing as seeing or conversing with the dead? If there is, how can I hear or see something that will convince me?" You had better try walking of dark nights in the vicinity of graveyards. We have never seen any soul without a body around it. Perhaps you might be more fortunate (?) if not of too skeptical a turn of mind.

H. A. W. (Auburn, Indiana,) asks: "1st. Has the source of the river Nile ever been discovered? 2d. What causes the Gulf stream, and why is the water warmer in it than it is in the adjacent ocean, and why is it of a different color? 3d. Which of the thirteen original colonies was last settled? 4th. With what velocity does light move, and how was its velocity ascertained? 5th. Is the moon ever visible when totally eclipsed? 6th. What is the nature of a comet? 7. What is the pressure of the atmosphere upon the earth? 8th. Has the story of the Phantom Hunter ever been published in book form? 9th. What should be the temperature of a school-room? 10th. What is the average time required while taking a meal. 11th. When will my subscription expire?" 1st. Not positively. The Nile is formed by the junction of two large streams, known as the Blue and White Nile. The Blue Nile has long since been traced to its source in the mountains of Abyssinia. The White Nile, which being the larger branch is considered the main channel of the river, has lately been traced to two great lakes, know as the Victoria and Albert Nyanza, lying just north of the Equator. Dr. Livingstone has lately declared his belief that certain streams he has discovered flowing from an upland region, 10 or 12 degrees south of the Equator, are the true origin of the Nile. He has not yet traced their full course, however, and eminent geographers doubt their connection with the Nile. 2d. The Gulf stream is caused by a flow northward through the Atlantic of the heated water of the tropics. Its direction is produced by the set given it by the Eastern coast of America, against which it impinges. Its movement has been imputed to the constant action of the trade winds, but the latest theory is that it is part of a general circulation of the ocean waters, a cold stream flowing from poles to equator at the bottom, and a warm stream from equator to poles on the surface. The cause of its peculiarity of color is not known. 3d. Georgia, in 1733. 4th. Light moves at the rate of about 190,000 miles in a second. Its velocity was first ascertained by observations on the eclipses of the moons of Jupiter. The observed time of these eclipses was found at variance with the calculated time, and the theory was devised that this was caused by the time that it took the light of Jupiter to reach the earth, at the various distances between these planets. The velocity of light has since been measured by other and more delicate means, which we have not space to describe. 5th. If any part of it were visible it would not be totally eclipsed. 6th. It is yet very doubtful whether it is a mass of this gas, or of aggregated meteorites. Comets certainly have some connection with the meteoric rings. They seem, by the spectroscope, to be variously composed, one, at least, having been shown to contain carbon. 7th. About 15 pounds per square inch. 8th. No. 9th. About 70 degrees. 10th. It depends on the appetite and spare time of the eater. Say from half an hour to an hour.

FARMER, (Fredricktown, N. J.,) asks: 1st. "Where is Mason and Dixon's line—and why did they give it that name? 2d. What is the name of the fastest trotting horse in America, and what is its time, and which is the fastest running horse? 3d. What is the fastest time on record ever made by Dexter? 4th. How is the President of the United States elected if he does not succeed in getting two-thirds majority? As it seems to be the fashion of your correspondents to ask about their writing, I will ask, how mine will do for a farmer." 1st. Mason and Dixon's line follows the parallel of 39 degs., 43 min., 26 sec., being the boundary line between Pennsylvania and Maryland. It was laid out in 1760, to settle disputes between the Lords Baltimore and the proprietaries of Pennsylvania. As it was found to be a difficult undertaking, Mason and Dixon, two distinguished English civil engineers, were applied to to complete it. It has been much mentioned of late years as forming the boundary between the free and the slave States. 2d. Dexter has long held that distinction, but we believe that Joe Willet, another horse owned by Mr. Bonner, has beaten Dexter's time. The time made lies between 2-16 and 2-17. There seems to be doubt about the exact fraction of a second. Running horses are not now trained in America. The fastest time on record made in a race is that of West Australian, for the Ascot cup in 1854. The time made was 2¼ miles in 4 minutes and 27 seconds. 4th. A simple majority of the Electoral Votes is all that is required, not a two-thirds vote. Your handwriting will answer very well for a farmer.

(Several letters are held over to be answered in our next.)

RECEIPTS.

RICH FRUIT CAKE.—One pound of sugar, three-fourths of a pound of butter, worked together until very light; one wineglass of brandy, one dozen ground cloves, half a nutmeg, a teaspoonful of ground cinnamon, ten eggs beat separately, the yolks to be used first, and afterward the whites, one-fourth of a pound of sliced citron, two pounds of washed currants rubbed in flour, and mixed in the cake with one pound of raisins cut fine and one seeded and left whole or cut once, and one pound of sifted flour; stir in the citron, currants and the chopped raisins, and lastly the flour and whole raisins alternately. Bake in a moderate oven in deep basins two hours. If the fire is strong the heat should be decreased the last hour. Line the basins with buttered paper, and keep a piece over the top of the cake. Frost it and it will keep two months or longer if desired.

ROAST OYSTERS.—There is no pleasanter frolic for an Autumn evening, in the regions where oysters are plentiful, than an impromptu "roast" in the kitchen. There the oysters are hastily thrown into the fire by the peck. You may consider that your fastidious taste is marvellously respected if they are washed first. A bushel basket is set to receive the empty shells, and the click of the oyster knives forms a constant accompaniment to the music of laughing voices. Nor are roast oysters amiss upon your own quiet supper table when the "good man" comes in on a wet night tired and hungry, and wants "something heartening."

CHICKEN SOUP.—Cut up the fowl; cut each joint, and let it boil one hour; then stir in thickening, pepper, salt, and parsley enough to season; put in a few dumplings; let it boil up a quarter hour, and serve.

THE Prairie Farmer says that a good method of keeping potatoes for family use is to pack them in barrels with sun-dried sand, covering the tops with turf and keeping them in a dry and cool atmosphere. Then they will neither shrivel nor shrink to any great extent.

VINEGAR FROM OLD CIDER.—Take it from the old cask and put it into a rum keg, for that is the best to make vinegar in, then add one pint of West India molasses to the gallon, keep it in a warm place, and you will have nice vinegar in the course of the year.

MRS. J. E.

RIDDLER.

Charades, Riddles, Problems, etc., must always be accompanied by their answers, or they will not be published.

All who take an interest in this column are respectfully invited to contribute.

HISTORICAL ENIGMA.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I am composed of 79 letters.

My 49, 24, 5, 71, 35, 61, 51, 45, 31, 69, 27, 75, was one of the greatest mathematicians of antiquity, the first who measured a degree of the meridian, and the first who determined the inclination of the earth's axis to the plane of the ecliptic, he died B. C. 195, aged eighty.

My 28, 10, 79, 40, 8, 38, 16, 50, 42, 47, was a Roman, proclaimed Emperor, A. D. 253. He was a persecutor of the Christians. He was vanquished and taken prisoner by the Persian king Sapor, who ordered him to be flayed alive, and his skin nailed up in one of the Persian temples.

My 4, 32, 59, 18, 72, 78, 2, 69, 70, 26, 63, was a fortress in Greece memorable for its siege, and the heroic resistance of its garrison, after a defense of twelve months, the fortress fell through the treachery of one of its inmates.

My 19, 29, 50, 20, 56, 20, 76, 73, 48, 64, 9, 5, 70, 3, 23, was a confederacy entered into by Hamburg and Lubeck, in the year 1241 to defend the German trade from the pirates and robbers which then infested sea and land. In the fourteenth century it attained a high political importance, and was called "mistress of lands, seas and crowns." It ceased in 1630.

My 78, 1, 18, 68, 15, 20, 66, 55, 36, 75, was one of the generals of Alexander, he fought with Cassander and Seleucus at the battle of Ipsus. He afterward seized Macedonia, after expelling Pyrrhus from the throne, B. C. 286. He was killed in battle, 281 B. C. in the eightieth year of his age.

My 4, 16, 24, 54, 6, 50, 33, 57, 13, 7, 77, 61, 19, 60, 8, was the first Englishman who tried to find a northwest passage to the Pacific ocean in 1576. He was knighted for his services against the Armada. He died in 1594, from a wound received in an attack on Brest.

My 21, 73, 65, 39, 17, was a celebrated general in the "thirty years' war" in Germany; he also served under Alva in Flanders. He commanded the Bavarian troops under Duke Maximilian, and fought at the battle of Prague. In 1626 he defeated the king of Denmark. In 1631 he took the city of Magdeburg, when he committed a horrible massacre. The same year he was routed by Gustavus Adolphus. He died April 30, 1632.

My 37, 29, 74, 22, 12, 40, 46, 57, was the leader of an insurrection, celebrated in English history, in the reign of Richard II. He was a blacksmith, and avenged an insult offered his daughter by a collector by striking him dead, the king invited him to a parley in Smithfield, where he was killed by the Mayor, William Walworth.

My 53, 5, 79, 11, 32, 8, 11, was a town in Scotland, where the Scotch army commanded by Comyn and Sir William Wallace was defeated by Edward I. of England July 22, 1298, between 20,000 and 40,000 of the Scots were slain.

My 41, 68, 25, 55, 34, 50, 77, 10, was an ancient country of Asia Minor, also called Bebrycia. It afforded an asylum to Hannibal. Nicomedes III. bequeathed it to the Romans B. C. 75.

My 52, 43, 45, 58, was a Roman Emperor, descended from the ancient kings of Etruria. After Nero's death he attached himself to Galba, he was defeated at Brixellum, and stabbed himself.

My 44, 19, 14, 24, 67, 2, 62, was a famous chancellor of England during the reign of George III. He died in 1806, at the age of seventy-four.

My whole is a beautiful couplet from Moore's "Irish Melodies."

W. H. MORROW,

Manor Station, Pa.

BURIED TOWNS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

1. We will go with Lewis to New York.
2. Ask Charles to narrate a story.
3. The Arab arose, mounted his steed and departed.
4. Neither the philosopher nor the astronomer were present.
5. Laura and Helen are now at college.
6. Our instructor walks with a cane.
7. Columbus sailed from Europe in search of an unknown country.
8. We saw acorns beneath the forest oak.
9. Let us strive not to make enemies, but friends.
10. We went to the city and there saw our preceptor.
11. Thomas has taken a tour South.
12. You may give James a lemon.
13. The cars will proceed when the battle ends.

Seaboard, N. C. EUGENE.

WORD SQUARES.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

I.

My 1st is a speck.
My 2d is a jewel.
My 3d is high.
My 4th is a lady's name.

II.

My 1st is a plant.
My 2d is the last.
My 3d is a lady's name.

III.

My 1st is an ocean.
My 2d is a measure.
My 3d is a drink.

N. C. D.

CONCEALED ACROSTIC.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

My 1st is in worry, but not in easy,
My 2d is in odious, but not in greasy,
My 3d is in rural, but not in stay,
My 4th is in laugh, but not in gay,
My 5th is in dear, but not in love,
My whole is around us, below and above.

N. C. D.

ANSWERS TO LAST.

MYTHOLOGICAL ENIGMA—

"Thee, wing-foot, all the gods, both high and low,
The arbiter of war and peace allow."

CONCEALED TREES.—1. Maple. 2. Upas. 3. Teak. 4. Yew. 5. Aspen. 6. Ash, 7. Pine.

DIAMOND PUZZLE—

1.—S K I P P E R
2.—D E A T H L Y
3.—S I M I L I E
4.—H O P E F U L
5.—S P A R M A N
6.—M I L L D A M
7.—F I R E M A N

WORD SQUARES—

I.	II.	III.	IV.
D O T A R D	A R O M A	A C M E G A S	
O R A T O R	R U R A L	C L A D A N A	
T A T T L E	O R B I T	M A Z E S A O	
A T T I L A	M A I N E	E D E N	
R O L L E R	A L T E R		
D R E A R Y			